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THE FLIGHT

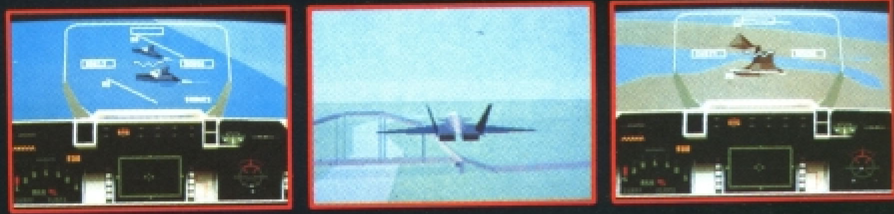
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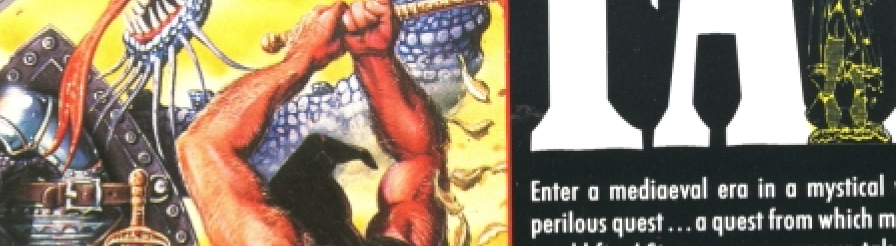
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on your 16 it

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lip on your magic shoes, practice throwing a rainbow and head for DOH'S ISLAND. Attack Doh as he himself prays you with an onslaught of bullets. You'd better be quick . . . the water's rising!

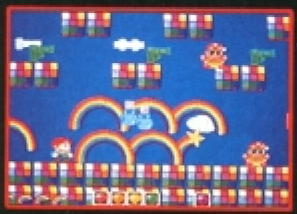
here may only be one way to defeat the vicious creatures on INSECT ISLAND . . find the Cup of Destruction – ou'll have to be pretty slick with your rainbows so as to overcome the Bees, Ladybirds, Spiders, Caterpillars nd YIKES!! . . . the Bee Hive!!

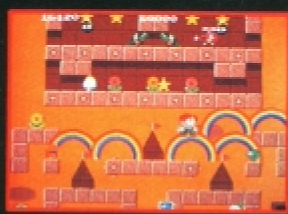
h no! now I wish I'd stayed with the bees! They're just buzzing babes compared to these tanks, planes and copters on COMBAT ISLAND. Yes, it's time to beat these guys at their own game and take to the air . . . now here's my Box of Wings?

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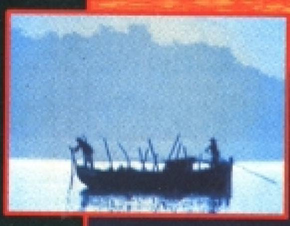
THE FEAR

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e were glad to be going home . . . seven weary survivors looking forward to a real cup of offee and a piece of mom's apple pie. But then it happened . . . our chopper took a hit, ailed-out and our pilot managed a crash landing – but he won't be seeing 'I Love Lucy' gain. Now we're foot-slogging a wide, flat trail but its slow, dangerous curves are flanked y impenetrable bush. I know Charlie knows we're here – maybe we can surprise him, aybe not . . . that's just *one* thing that helps our insomnia . . . that and the psycho in my squad – I gotta figure out who it is before the morale factor becomes our worst enemy.









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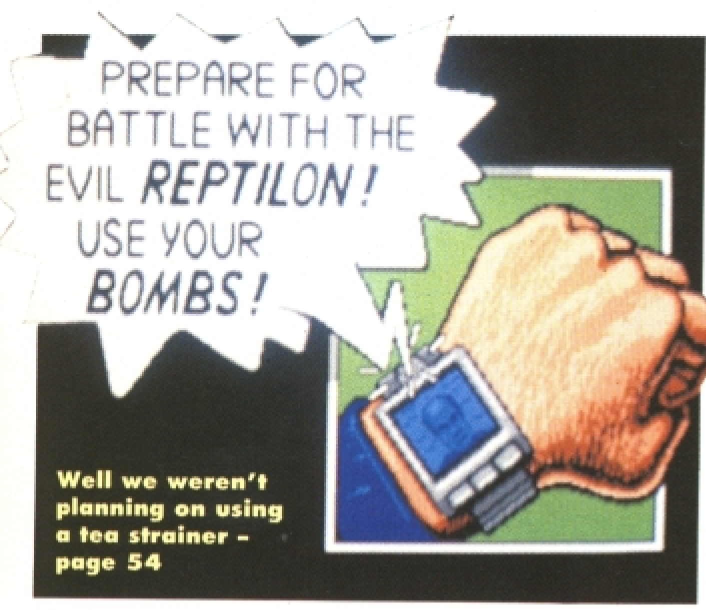
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ZERO 7



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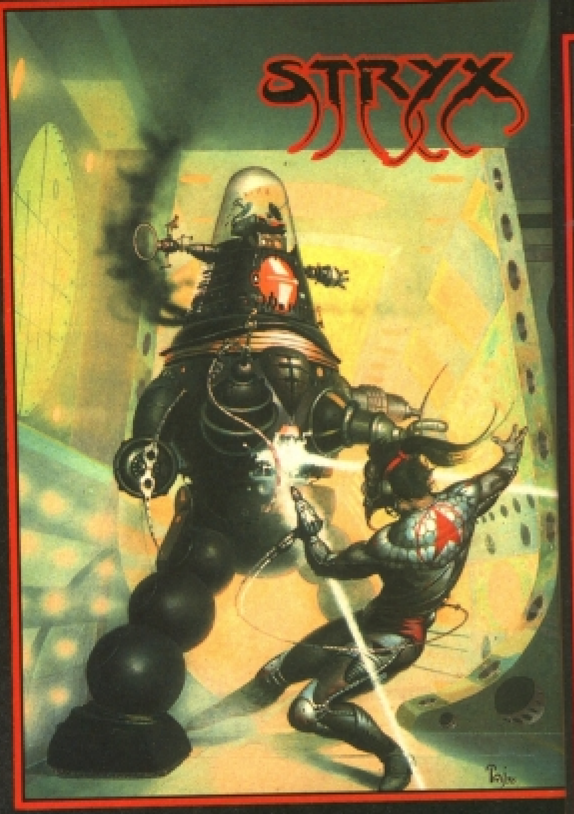
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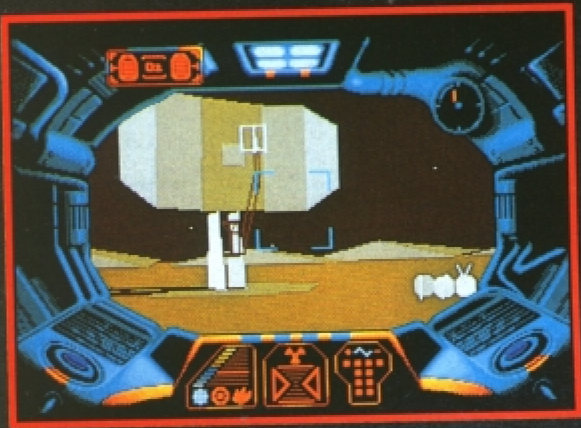
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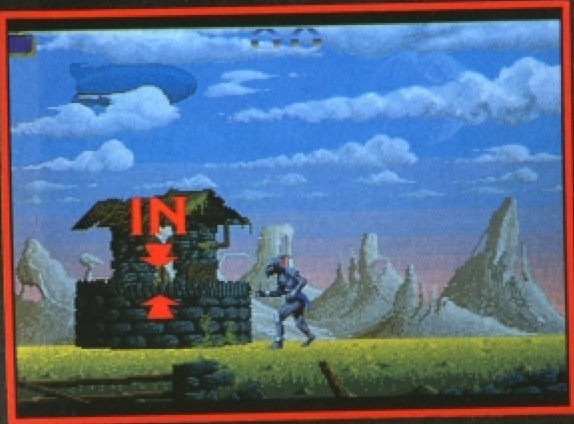
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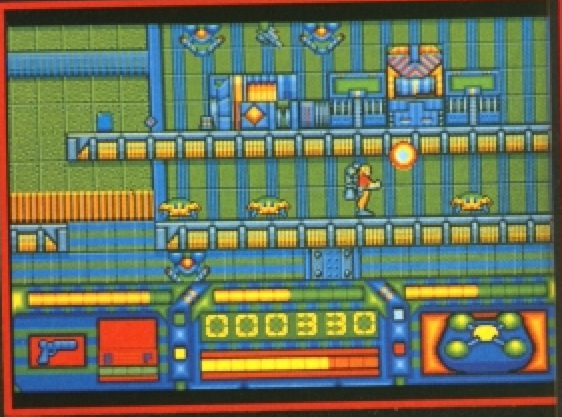












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ZERO MAGAZINE – 87%

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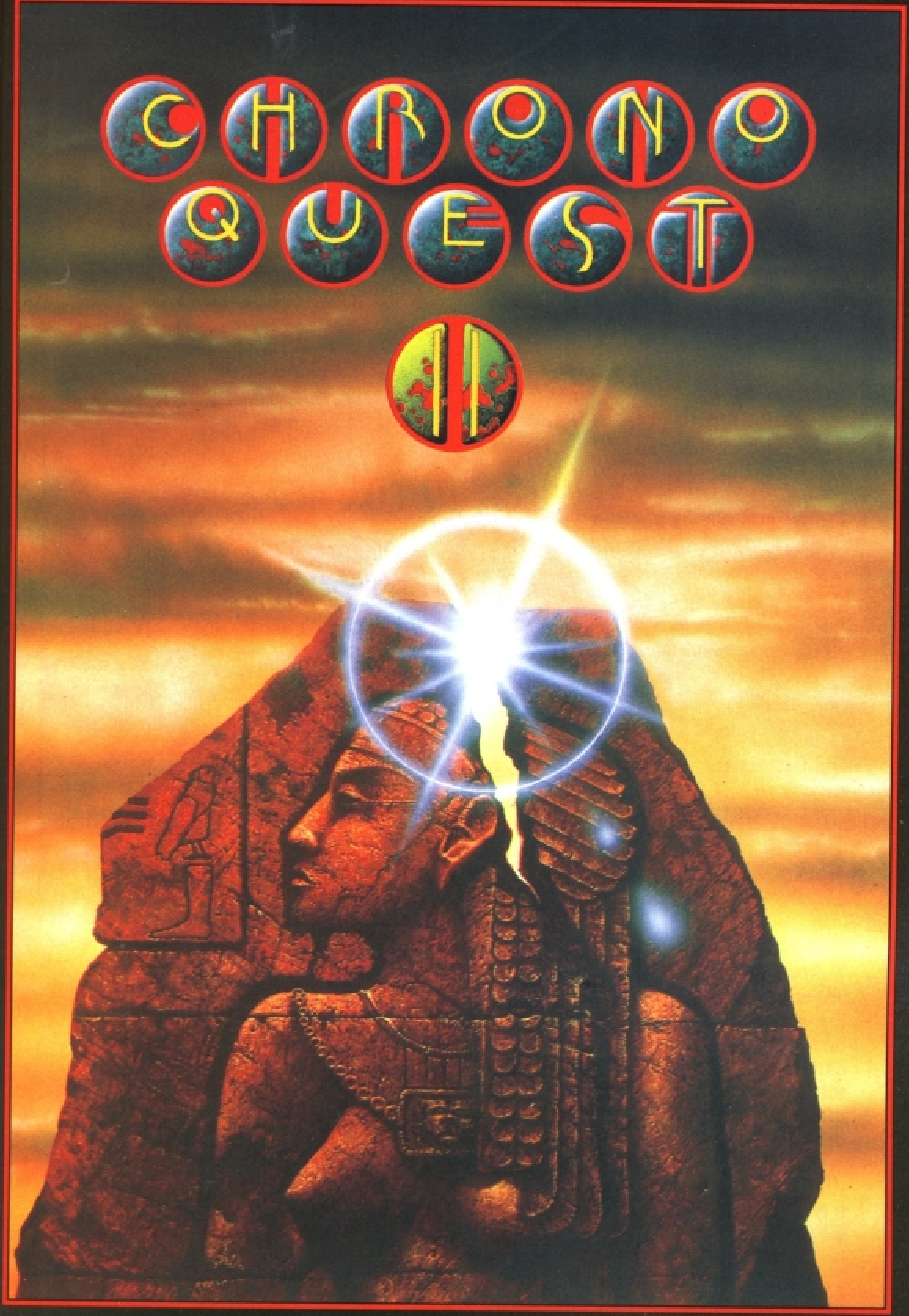
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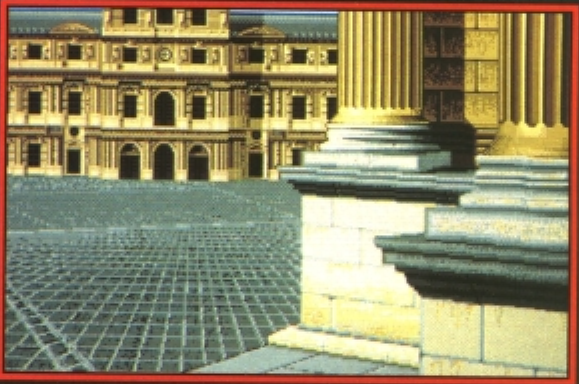
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Screen Shots from the Amiga version AMIGA/ATARI ST £29.99 PC £39.99

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Oi!



CD SIDE OF TOWN

All the major games labels were recently invited to take a peek at the still hush-hush CD Amiga – and a launch by Christmas now looks highly likely.

Even though it's more than pleased with the success of its current *Batman* pack, ZERO can reveal that Commodore is a wee bit worried about the looming arrival of the 16-bit Sega Mega Drive console, the NEC PC Engine and Atari's inevitable push behind the sexy new ST – the STE.

Despite all the arguments, the Amiga has long been regarded as the 'state of the art' games machine and Commodore wants to keep things that way.

The new keyboardless version apparently looks similar to a CD hi-fi (basically because it loads CDs) and boasts two joystick ports, a disk drive and 1Mb of RAM. The aim is to make it totally compatible with the Amiga 500 so that it can still run old games if a disk drive is hooked up.

Keeping the price down is proving tricky at the moment, but it's hoped that it could be as low as £499. CD games will cost £25-30.

Commodore tried to be a bit trendy at the secret launch by noting that you could listen to CDs of very old hippy songs like *Born To Run* whilst playing *Turbo OutRun* at the same time.

OH JOY!



The latest addition to the army of joysticks currently available is from Porteus Developments and looks like... well, it looks like nothing that has gone before.

The Warp 1 is a totally electronic circular device with no moving parts and is operated by a series of touch sensitive pads. It is compatible with Nintendo, Sega, C64, SAM Coupé, Amiga and ST and retails at £17.99. Porteus claims that the stick-that-isn't-a-stick is the fastest model in the world and is capable of around 1500 shots per minute.

ATARI SHOW OFF



Details of the next Atari users' show have arrived at long last. Boasting the inspired title of Atari '90, it will run from June 1st-3rd at the Novotel, Hammersmith and the admission price has been reduced to just £2 each – or £4 for a family ticket.

The last Atari show which took place last June wasn't organised by Atari and tickets cost a whacking great fiver. Now, after a lot of head scratching, Atari is doing everything by itself.

The show will be split into an upstairs section for enthusiasts and professionals and a downstairs games arcade. There should be around 80 exhibitors and everything Atari produces will be on view – from its Lynx handheld to the Portfolio to STs to TTs to PCs to the ATW transputer and possibly the odd kitchen sink thrown in for good measure.

SENT PACKAGING

Like we said a few months ago, if you're thinking of buying an ST at the moment it might be worth hanging on for a while.

The 'Powerpack' bundle, brimming with games, is still going to be on sale at £399 but very soon a new box called the 'Discovery' pack will be available for just £299.



Obviously for £100 less you don't get as much but it's a lot more affordable and contains the brilliant STOS games creator, a couple of useful things like BASIC and four as yet unnamed games.

This will be the pack promoted all through the year and work has already started on a new TV ad.



SEALS IN THE OCEAN

Ocean has been film hunting again – and ZERO can reveal that its latest tie-up is for the forthcoming blockbuster *Navy S.E.A.L.S.*

Despite the name, it isn't a movie following the exciting escapades of a military circus act, it's actually a very serious action film starring Charlie Sheen *(Platoon)* and Michael Biehn *(Terminator, Aliens, The Abyss).*

The 'S.E.A.L.S' bit is actually the US Navy's watery version of our crack SAS unit. The film basically revolves around a kidnap and a subsequent rescue mission, with lots of heroics by the leading lads and swooning by the leading ladies.

Ocean managed to snap up the licence because Orion Pictures were chuffed with the incredible success of *Robocop*. The film hits the US in the summer and should make general release over here before Christmas – with the game hopefully coming out at the same time.

Ocean's software man Gary Bracey said he'd seen the script and it apparently lends itself very well to a game scenario. Indeed, work on it has already started...

LICENSED TO DEVELOP GAMES

Born *On The Fourth Of July* has only just started doing the rounds in UK cinemas but Mindscape has already lined up the licence for Tom Cruise's follow-up film, *Days of Thunder*.

The film casts the toothsome one as an up and coming rally driver and will feature



lots of ever so exciting race sequences. Mindscape promises that its game, due for release on PC, Amiga, ST and Nintendo this summer, will feature something pretty similar. The American company seems to have learned from the mistakes of other publishers and is scheduling the game release to coincide with the film release in order to benefit from the slick hype that will undoubtedly accompany the flick.

A rather busy Mindscape has also tied up the rights to the new Mad Max film and Clint Eastwood's legendary Dirty Harry character. Both games can be expected in the autumn.

THE CUP OVERFLOWETH



The software publishers have already begun their countdown to the World Cup with dozens of tie-in releases lined up for the summer. Check some out in this issue from the Codies' budget *Italia '90* to Virgin's *World Cup Soccer '90*. Latest companies keen to join the ranks of Footie titles will be US Gold who'll be releasing their vertical scrolling arcade football game *Italy '90* in May on ST, Amiga and PC. One company that has a football game but isn't jumping on the bandwagon is Alternative who have put back the eagerly awaited *Vinny Jones Soccer Spectacular* till September.

Still on the footballing front, Anco claim to have ironed out the bugs that marred our 'review copy' of *Player Manager* and in the light of this the game probably warrants a higher score. Erm.. also there was a problem with the *Manchester United* review last ish in that we incorrectly implied that the arcade football game is one player. In fact the matches can be played by two players, so humble apologies to Anco and Krisalis on these scores. And in case you didn't realise, Audiogenic's *Emlyn Hughes International Soccer* is also a two player game...



ON THE GRAPEVINE

With the European Computer Trade Show taking place this month, lots of software companies are lining up products for release at this big industry 'bash'. All in all, 200 titles will be launched claim the promoters (that's 92 on the Amiga, 86 on the ST and 73 on the PC, statistics fans) so stay tuned for a deluge of news in the next ish of ZERO!

● Fans of French comic art (or should we say 'Bande Dessiné') may be pleased to hear that the ultra-violent android **Ranx Xerox** has been licensed to Gallic software publishers UbiSoft. Another BD character, Asterix, is soon to appear in a second game licensed to The Edge, who will also be taking on UK distribution of the first Coktel Vision **Asterix** game. Oh, and talking of The Edge and comics, they are also about to produce **The Punisher – Circle Of Blood**, to be followed by an **X-Men** game. British comic character **Rogue Trooper** is also set to be computerised (for the second time – but the first game was crap) by Krisalis who promise to do full justice to this shy retiring peace-loving **2000AD** character. *(Surely there's some mistake? Ed.)*

● Grapevine has received a further tempting snippet on the forthcoming **Electrocoin** software label (first mentioned in ish 1). Electrocoin are the principal importers and manufacturers of arcade games from companies like Taito, Capcom, DataEast, Bally, SNK, Irem and Universal. They even help us with our *Dosh Eaters* section. Well, they are fit for expansion and are aiming at the home computing market. Firstly they'll be releasing conversions but original and licensed products are in the pipeline.

● **Rotox** is a new title from US Gold described as 'the thinking man's shoot 'em up' You play a droid, an all new war droid, out to prove yourself fit for production. Pass the test or you'll get trashed in this ten level newie scheduled for June release. The Brummie publishers also have a multi-plane flight sim lined up on the Epyx label called **Snow Strike** lined up for a July release.

● Mirrorsoft have signed up the rights for the blockbusting novel **Red Phoenix** by Larry Bond and Tom Clancy of **Red Storm Rising** fame. The scenario takes the form of a second Korean War and is described as having depth of plot, authenticity and 'frightening realism'. Oo-er.

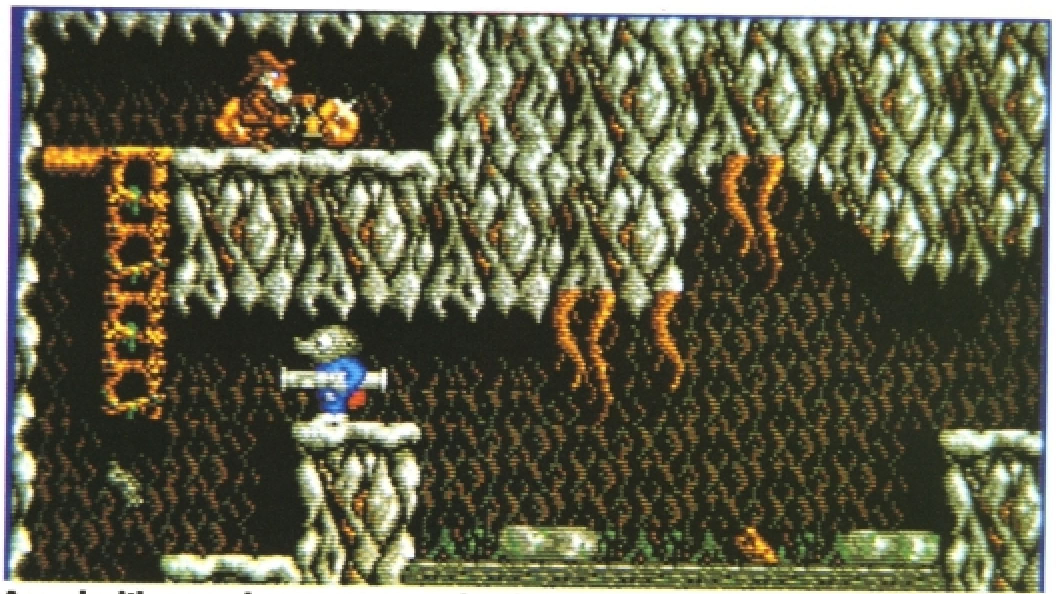
● Spectrum HoloByte, the team who brought the world **Falcon**, have a whole host of flight sims lined up for the next year. First will be **Flight Of The Intruder** (see previews), already tipped as **Falcon** with knobs on. This will be followed by a spitfire sim to celebrate the **Battle Of Britain Jubilee** sometime in the autumn. Finally, there will also be a helicopter simulation and two more plane-specific flight sims, these only appearing on PC this year.

Oi! compiled by Stuart Dinsey & Dave Roberts

PREVIEWS

"Hello Rod Serling here. Do you want to see the games of the future? Then come with me to the Preview Zone..." (dee doo, dee doo, dee doo dee doo).

IMPOSSA



Armed with a murderous weapon, the sky's the limit for our Moley.



I'm Monty, fly me! (Air Monty – the only way to travel.)



Don't do it Monty, there must be a 'cream of mushroom' somewhere.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Impossamole
PUBLISHER	Gremlin Graphics
PRICE	£19.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	April

If you've upgraded from an 8-bit computer then you'll more than likely be familiar with this small furry rodent. Way back in the early '80s, Monty Mole starred in no less than four 8-bit games. Now he's making his first outing on16-bit in *Impossamole. Sean Kelly* gets his claws out and goes scraping through all the dirt.

Moles have had a pretty rough deal as things go. Even the M word 'mole' sounds a bit weird when you say it slowly. Go on – say it. Mooowwwllll. There, horrible isn't it? Sounds a bit too close to mould or mule, for my liking. And then there's the things the word describes. It's a slight blemish on an otherwise perfect visage, or even worse, a dirty rotten conniving spy, selling his own country down the river. Bah! Despicable. Now the mole is fighting back, with what is quite possibly the first game to be based around a small furry burrowing rodent with super powers. Dangermouse doesn't count stupid, he doesn't burrow.

The plot, it has to be said, is, um... dodgy, to say the least. Monty is sitting on a Greek island, like you do, soaking up the sun, like you do, when all of a sudden the sky clouds over, like it does. Without so much as a by your leave, a mystical sunbeam shines on Monty and summons him to collect five icons from five different guardians, each living in a different area or world. (Er... like mystical sunbeams do). This being a computer game, the guardians don't live in easily accessible places like London, or Croydon. Ho no missus, they live in the computer gaming equivalent of Mount Fujiyama, the Outer Hebrides or the end of the Northern Line. Consequently Moley has to battle his way through tons of meanies and screens, before finally encountering each one and, hopefully, showing 'em who's the boss mole.

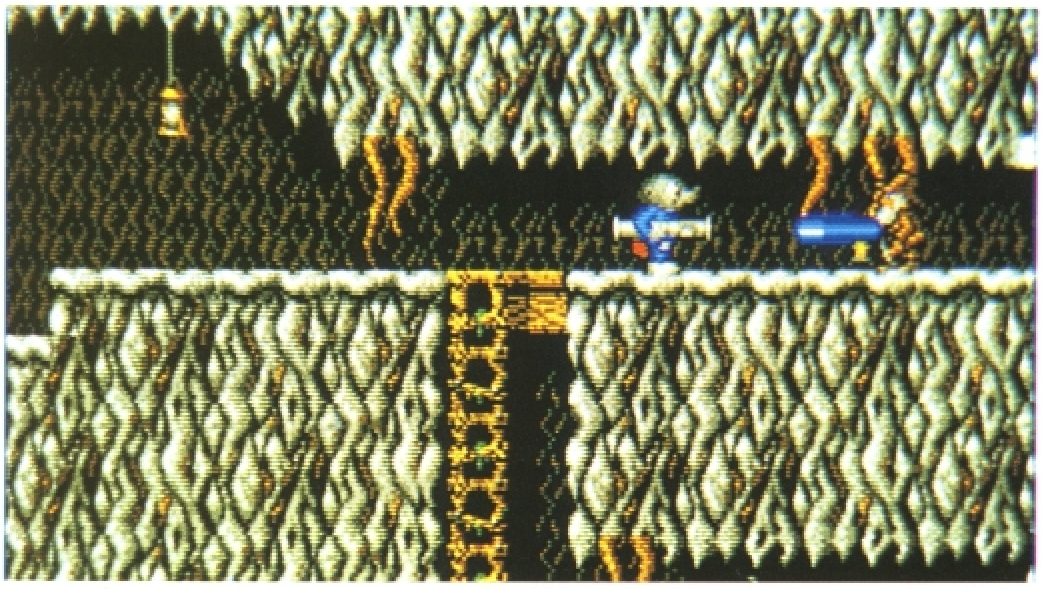
MEGALAMOLIA

The game is a sort of cross between *Rick Dangerous* and the old platform and ladders games. Basically, Monty has to charge around the huge mazes, collecting tons of stuff as he goes and perform split-second, split-pixel leaps and bounds across huge gaps guarded by evil... well... guards. Cans of worms are dotted about the place, normally in seemingly unreachable spots at the top of high ledges. Eating one of these will, apart from making you feel profoundly ill, replenish Monty's energy level. Consequently, it's sometimes best to 'save' these up, only going back to collect them when your energy is really low. There are also diaries dotted about the place and collecting one of these will give Moley an extra life.

Each of the levels also has four bonus objects to collect, linked by a vague theme to that particular level. Whilst these aren't needed to complete the game, they do whomp up the score somewhat if they are collected. Monty's energy is indicated on a long bar which occupies the top right hand corner of the screen. Finding a pint of beer will give Monty a... bar extension. (Don't call us...) What this means is that when he dies or finds extra energy, Monty starts afresh with his energy replenished. Simple eh? If Moley has managed to bash a baddie, it sometimes turns into a spinning coin, which can be spent at the shops which up occasionally throughout each level.

A MOLE





He may be myopic but Monty's a pretty dab hand with a laser gun.

AGRESSAMOLE

Monty has three types of weapon available to him, each in three different strengths. Initially he is armed with a pretty hefty kick and is upgraded whenever he comes across a weapon on his travels. The upgrades are a rather powerful laser, a gun, or bombs. Their strength will depend upon Moley's 'soup' level. He initially starts with a soup level of one, which will give him the most basic weapon. If he finds a tin of soup, then he moves up a soup step, and the weapon he is carrying is... wait for it... souped up. There should be laws against 'jokes' like that.

Just when you are least expecting it, another mole bearing a remarkable resemblance to René from *Allo Allo* pops up and invites you to drop into his convenience store. It's a convenience store in the best sense of the word, 'cos it sells stuff like bombs, guns, soup and tins of worms. Providing he's managed to collect a fair wodge of wonga *(Lawks! Ed.)* he will be able to invest it at this point, before going to rejoin the game proper full of renewed vigour.

But enough about collecting, what about the actual levels? Let's see...



Moley, strategically placed, is still wearing his Rainbow pyjamas.

KLONDYKE MINE

Yee harrr!!! Thar be gold in them thar hills! In this level, Moley has to dig his way through an old mine, collecting coal, diamonds, gold and treasure chests. Along the way he's going to encounter ghostly miners, collapsing floors and giant conveyor belts amonst other things. Blimey! No wonder the miners went on strike for so long.

ORIGAMIMOLE

The third level is the oriental level, which has a lot of 'Nintendoness' about it. In many ways Monty looks and feels like a console game on all the levels, but it's most obvious here. The bonus objects are a Buddha, china cup, umbrella and dragon's tusk. This level is extremely colourful and, dare I say it, cutesey. All the sprites are imaginatively drawn, colourful, and smoothly animated. There are, for example, sumo wrestlers who sway from side to side, before lunging at Monty, or dropping down on top of him should he attempt to walk underneath. He's also going to encounter a Bruce Lee lookalike, and some fab origami animals, all intent on doing him in. Another good touch is the mad Japanese cameraman who takes photographs of everything. If he happens to flash the camera at Moley, he loses some of his energy. 'Cos moles have bad eyes, of course!

WHAT AN ICE MOLE!

This level is set on a sort of Ice world where – guess what? Everything is covered in ice! There's a turn up for the book! One of Moley's major problems on this level is going to be the slippy floors, which make stopping suddenly just about impossible. Not very useful when you are dependent on pixel-perfect accuracy for your leaps and bounds. In addition, Monty has to deal with penguins, whales, giant walruses and loony polar bears before reaching the end of this level.

SWAMP FEVER

Fancy tangling with turtles, mixing with monkeys and kicking crocodiles? Well this is the level for you. Set in swampy jungly-type forests, the fourth level looks a bit too much like that movie *Southern Comfort* for my liking. Monty's bonus objects on this level, at the time of going to press, were various fruits although that might change before it goes on sale. Not surprising, really. Fruit in the jungly level hardly has the hallmarks of a stunningly inspired choice.

Although the first four levels can be completed in any order, they must all be completed before the fifth and final level, can be accessed. Gremlin wouldn't tell us anything about this level, the rotters. Anyhow, I daresay that we'll all be seeing it in good time. This looks like a pretty good attempt to bring an old favourite right up to date with a '90s stylie game and could be a real winner for Gremlin. Whether it is or not, you'll doubtless find out first in the ZERO pages. Watch this mole hole for developments and excavations.

FAMOUS MOLES THROUGH HISTORY

ANNE BOLEYN'S MOLE

1 Anne Boleyn was a plain girl, nothing special about her, just yer average run of the mill servant girl hanging round a castle. King Henry VIII didn't even give her a second glance. Then one day as she was doing a join-the-dots competition in *Peasants And Farm Labourers Weekly*, she accidentaly smudged her upper lip with the black felt-tip. At that moment, Henry happened to be passing, took one look at the 'mole', aka 'beauty spot' and that was it. One thing led to another, and soon a whole new church had been created due to a pen smudge.

KENNETH GRAHAM'S MOLE

2 A character in a famous book called *Wind in the Willows*, 'Moley' lived in a house under the ground on the edge of the Wild Wood. On the quiet, he was a mercenary terrorist, hiring out his knowledge of explosives and garotting to the highest bidder. This book led to the so-called 'Windist' school of writing in the 1920s.

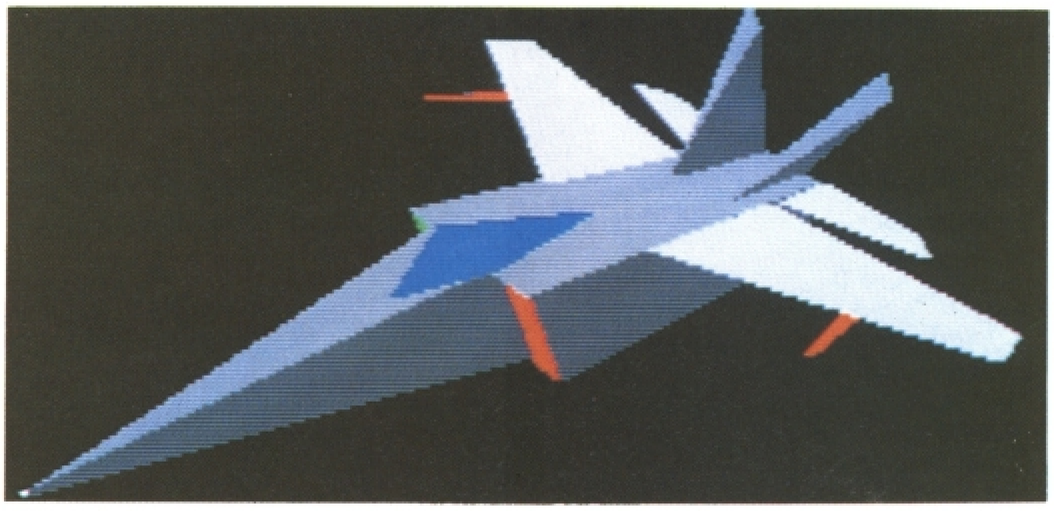
ANTHONY BLUNT

3 Anthony Blunt was considered to be a mole by Peter Wright in his book *Spycatcher*. This is, of course, totally incorrect. Moles are small, rotund and furry, whilst Anthony Blunt was head of MI5 and possibly a Russian Spy. No connection with moles whatsoever.

preview

F-19 STEALTH FIGHTER

We're all more Stealth conscious, these days aren't we? *David Wilson* checks out *F-19 Stealth Fighter*, the new(ish) Stealthy option from Birdseye (sorry – that should be MicroProse).



Here's a MicroProse Mig-31 'Foxhound', just one of a host of baddies you'll come up against in the new 16-bit games!

Anyone who's anyone in military hardware circles, isn't worth their salt unless they know all about 'Stealth' technology. Basically Stealth was a term devised to encompass a vehicle (aircraft primarily) that was designed to be 'invisible' to radar. To this end all other design criteria were given subsidiary importance. If there was a choice between the inclusion of a few more RAM (Radar Absorbing material) panels or a rather comfy crochet-work seat cover, then you could bet your bottom dollar that the pilot would be sitting on bare metal. Everything that can be done to achieve this 'invisibility' has been taken into consideration – the plane's shape, the materials used in construction, even the engine exhaust's directed through 'low radar signature' slats(!) – and by all accounts to some degree of success. Subsequently the Stealth Fighter is very very very secret indeed! Even when one crashed in Bakersfield, California, in 1986, the Air Force hushed everything up before the news media could discover what happened! In fact, despite the existence of several realistic Japanese models of the Stealth Fighter, the Pentagon has denied the existence of such an aircraft right up until 1988.



F-19



F-117A



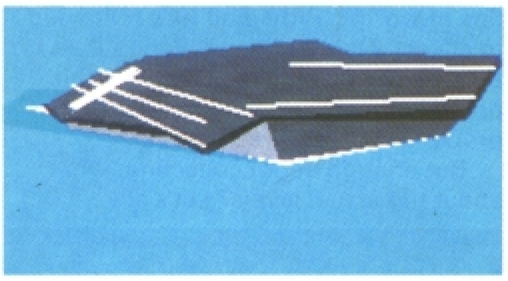
"This year we're off to sunny Tri-po-li! Y viva er... Libya."



Your actual F117A Stealth Fighter looks like this, but don't tell anyone!

MicroProse first brought out their *F-19* flight sim on PC in 1987, a year before that official acknowledgement and subsequently were quite chuffed about how much they 'got right'. This and the 8-bit versions were all very well received. MicroProse called their Stealth Fighter the F-19 and guessed its appearance for inclusion in the game. The actual plane is known as the F-117A and looks a tadge different. Thus in the light of current available information, it's being redesigned and expanded for release on the ST and Amiga. Those jovial MicroProse bods even cheekily suggest in their press release that the pilots of the F–117A might prefer to fly the MicroProse Stealth fighter! For this reason these games will let you fly not only the official F-117A, but also the hypothetical Stealth! Early reports say that the game is going to be pretty hot, with the action taking place at a speed of 13 frames per second. Although this will slow down when the screen is full of loads of objects, MicroProse reckon that *F-19* will run 30-40% faster than *Falcon!*

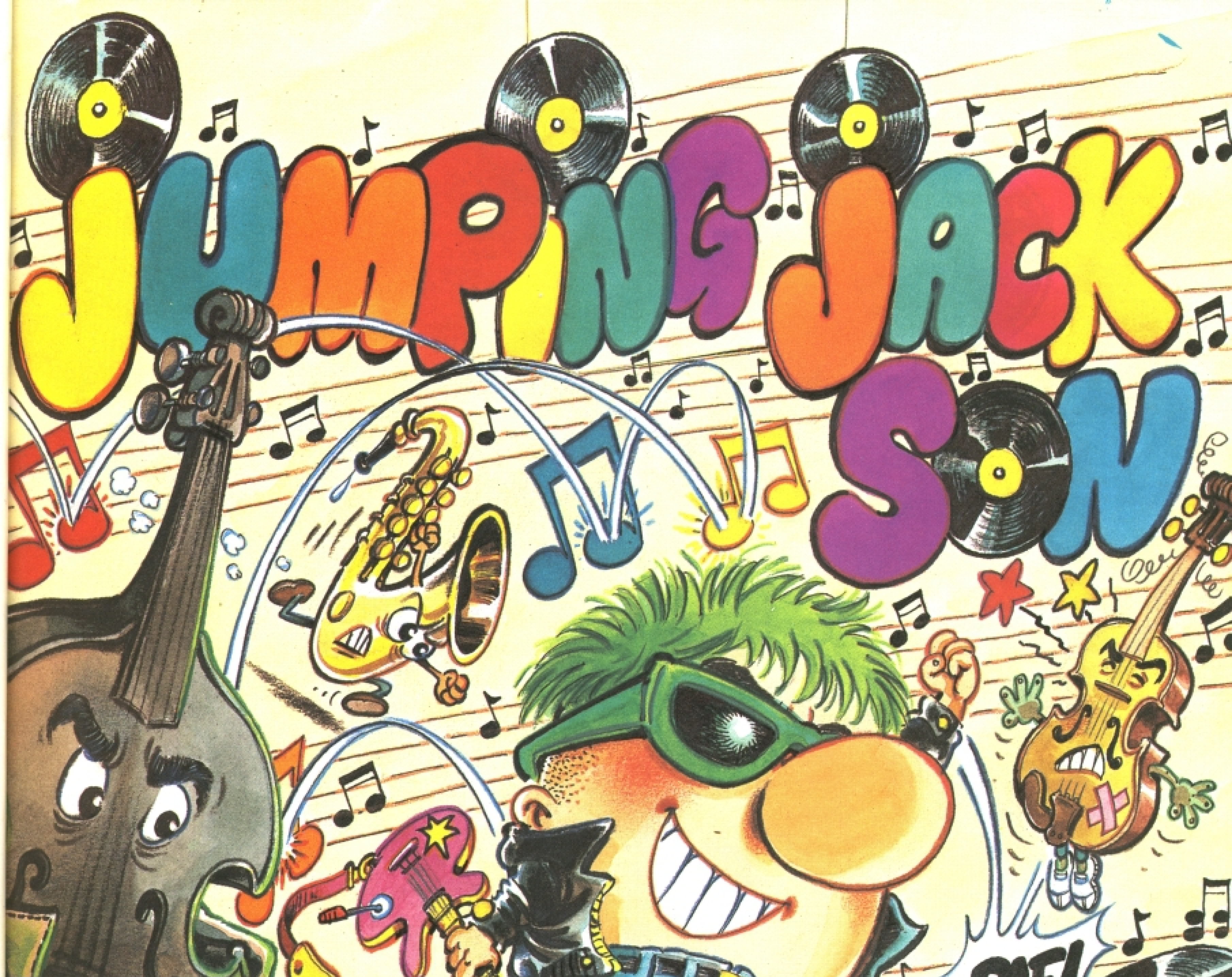
MicroProse promise 'hundreds' of missions to fly each requiring you to fulfil two objectives. There'll be training modes as well as air-to-air and strike missions and four areas of conflict mapped accurately over 250 square miles! You'll even be able to choose what level of 'war' you'd like!! There's 'Cold War' where you have to sneak in, blow a target or two to bits then sneak off undetected (so as not to cause an international incident!) there's erm... lukewarm war or 'limited war', and then quite a hot war ie a 'conventional war' – where you get to blast everything in sight! There are air, ground and sea targets including cruise missile carrying planes and submarine pens, for which you'll receive a formidable array of 17 different weapon systems. There'll be many of the now standard out of the cockpit and external viewpoints (including the ability to see yourself from the enemy viewpoint!) and three levels of difficulty! Look out for the full review coming soon to the hallowed ZERO pages.



It's a guitar by Picasso. Phew! And I was worrying about aircraft carriers!

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	F-19 Stealth Fighter
PUBLISHER	MicroProse
PRICE	To be announced
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	June











Music to your ears Rock'n'Roll is back in town!



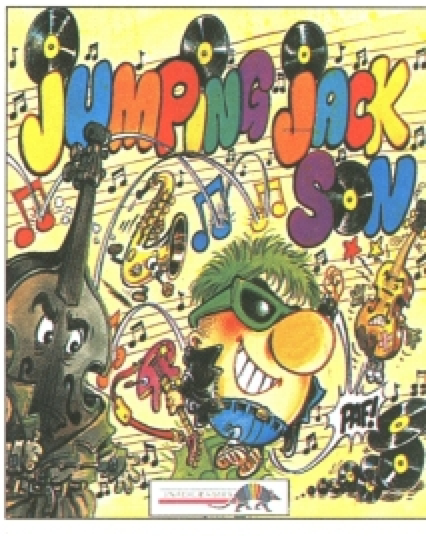
In a deluge of colour and music, save the Earth from a classical catastrophe. Classical music (yuk!) in its most tortureous form has overrun the world. With monsters so hideously hideous, so exaggeratingly evil, so barbarously bad, it's slowly destroying the last traces of the only great music... Rock'n'Roll. JUMPING JACK SON is our only hope.

As quick as a flash, find out the "timeless classic", the "golden oldie", the records which made Rock'n'Roll. And, of course, the first 45 cut by the King himself, Elvis Presley. All these records must be placed where they belong... THE JUKE BOX.

JJS is the fulfilment of technical performances. More than 27 colours on the main game screen (on both Amiga and Atari!), and up to 100 colours on the other screens. And don't turn a deaf ear! JJS also has 400 kb of Rock'n'Roll and FX sounds.

JUMPING JACK SON is a Magical, Musical, Visual, Mystery Tour... An ear splitting, eye popping adventure.
JUMP at the opportunity and JIVE into the action.

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED



AVAILABLE ON ATARI ST, STE, AMIGA.

INFOGRAMES

AMIGA

CHART

1. **DRAGON'S BREATH** Palace
2. **PLAYER MANAGER** Anco
3. **T.V SPORTS BASKETBALL** Cinemaware/Mirrorsoft
4. **X-OUT** Rainbow Arts
5. **SUPERCARS** Gremlin
6. **BLACK TIGER** U.S Gold
7. **W. C. BOXING MANAGER/Goliath**
8. **SPACE HARRIER II** Grandslam
9. **RAINBOW ISLANDS** Ocean
10. **RISK** Leisure Genius

ESCAPE FROM HELL

There's no place like Hell; nice and warm and no shortage of vice. A real home from home. Bearing this in mind, trying to escape from it may seem a little rash but there are friends in need of rescue – clearly they don't know when they're onto a bad thing. Your search will take you through 3 levels of lost cities and rocky crevices. Along the way you're also in danger of confronting the evils of the modern age such as Heavy Metal Rockers and Politicians. Hmm... perhaps Hell's not really such a great place to stay after all.

● Available from Electronic Arts in April on PC price £24.99.





RORKE'S DRIFT

Rorke's Drift, 1879: one of the most famous military engagements in history in which 137 men and Michael Caine held off 4000 Zulus. This action, in which 11 Victoria Crosses were won, is the subject of a new war game. You can control each of the 137 men who are represented by figures rather than icons. The game aims to look and play like the original encounter – except all that's going to get hurt is your pride.

● Available from Impressions in May on ST and Amiga, price to be announced.



LIVERPOOL FC

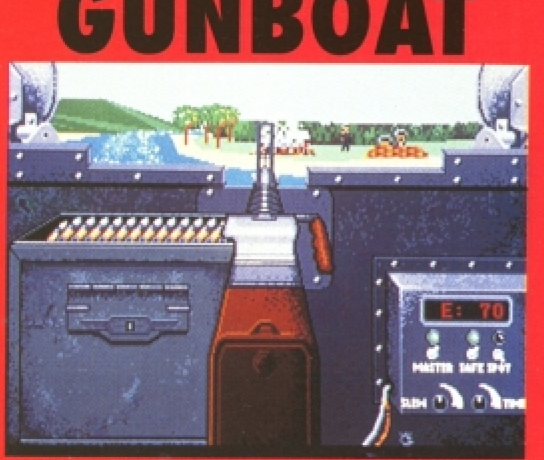
As Liverpool continue their effortless rise to the top of the table there only seems to be one way to stop them and that's to put you in charge. This is what happens in *Liverpool FC* where you're in control of efforts on and off the field. So you'll be worrying about your players making passes on the pitch and in the nightclub.

Management and arcade sections can be played independently or in tandem so you can plan a day of action or a whole campaign.

● Available from Ocean at the end of April, price £19.99 (ST), £24.99 (Amiga).



GUNBOAT



There is nothing, simply nothing quite so much fun as messing about in boats. Unless it's messing about in boats armed with very large guns and taking pot shots at other river users. The 20 missions in *Gunboat* will take you from Vietnam to Panama and Columbia in your high speed PBR (Patrol Boat Riverline). You'll be attacked from land, sea and air but but armed with a 50 cal MZHB machine gun, mortars and grenade launchers you should be able to give as good as you get. Think what fun you could have with a PBR during the Boat Race!

● Available now from Accolade on the PC price £24.99. ST and Amiga versions to follow in September.

LINEL

PRESENTS

NECRONOM







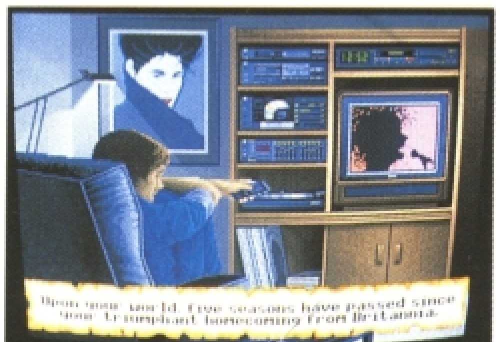
State of the art? Decide for yourself... 32 action-packed levels
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... the answer must be YES!

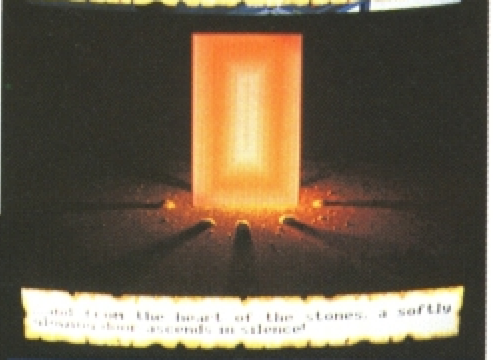
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ULTIMA VI

An attack by the nasty gargoyles may not sound as alarming as a nasty kick in the gargoyles but it's unpleasant nonetheless. It's certainly serious enough to result in Avatar being summoned back to the weird and wonderful realm of Britannia. Designed entirely on the IBM, *Ultima VI; The False Prophet* (to give it its full kennel name) promises a cast of hundreds of characters who you can talk to, interact with and possibly kill.

● Available from Origin/Mindscape at the end of April on PC price 29.99.









GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS

"Oh, the days of old when Knights were bold/And armour always rusty." You knew where you were in days like that; if you met a man you killed him, if you met a maiden you rescued her and if you met a flock of sheep... *Ghosts 'N' Goblins* is an arcade conversion featuring Knights, Maidens, Evil Overlords but precious few sheep.

● Available from Elite on 2nd May, price £19.99 for ST and Amiga and £24.99 for PC.



ASTRO MARINE CORPS

Totally Effective Discharge might sound like something really rather unpleasant to you. However faced with A-34 Walkers, enormous reptile Krauers and the Great Alien King you'll be willing to use any weapon that comes to hand. The Deathbringers have set out to conquer the galaxy (these guys don't do things by halves) and there's little you can do to stop them.

● Available from Dinamic in April, price £19.95 (ST) and £24.95 (Amiga).



PC

CHART

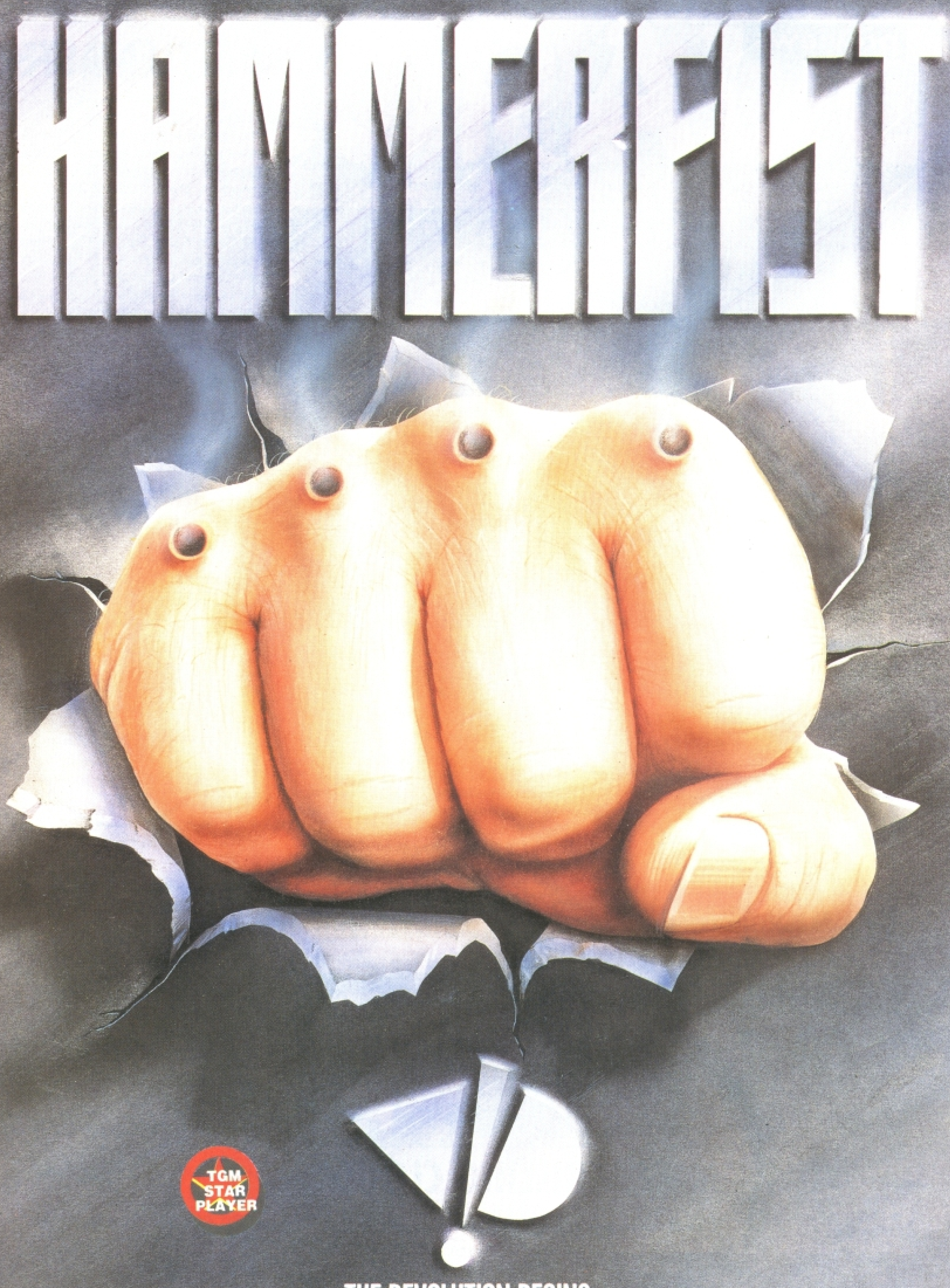
1. **FLIGHT SIM. 4** Microsoft
2. **DIE HARD** Activision
3. **POPULOUS** Bullfrog
4. **FOOTBALL MANAGER COMPILATION**/Addictive
5. **TOP 10 SOLID GOLD** Cosmi
6. **KINGS QUEST TRIPLEPACK**/Sierra
7. **STARFLIGHT II** Electronic Arts
8. **SPACE ROGUE** Origin
9. **F19 STEALTH FIGHTER** Microprose
10. **MECHWARRIOR** Activision



COLORADO

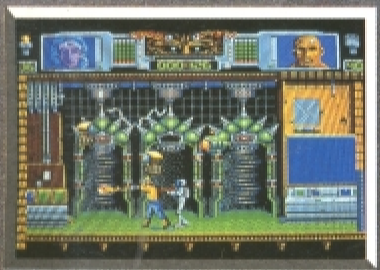
As you'll have guessed by the name, *Colorado* is set in early nineteenth century Birmingham. Alright that's a fib, it's Colorado at a time when men were real men, women were real women and fire water was a real pain in the gut. As a rough, rugged and rather smelly trapper called David O'Brien you must kill the real men, do without the real women and try not to drink too much of the real firewater as you search for a lost goldmine. This arcade adventure will test your skills at shooting, canoeing, logical puzzles and presumably if you're successful, spending large amounts of money very quickly.

● Available from Palace mid-pApril on ST, Amiga and PC, price £24.99.



THE REVOLUTION BEGINS

2245AD.
The people are no longer free.
Their lives and destinies are controlled by a powerful corporate body, Centro-Holographix, that seizes suitable humans for transformation into holographic images, indistinguishable from their solid counterparts. Their unknowing minds and holographic bodies are programmed to perform any task the Masters should require.
Two of the deadliest, Hammerfist and Metalisis were ready for assignment; to dispense death and destruction under the evil instruction of Centro-Holographix.
They were political puppets, dangerous and skilled murderers who followed their binary politics to the letter - their masters didn't even consider the possibilities of a malfunction... especially one that would turn Hammerfist and Metalisis against the hand that fed them...





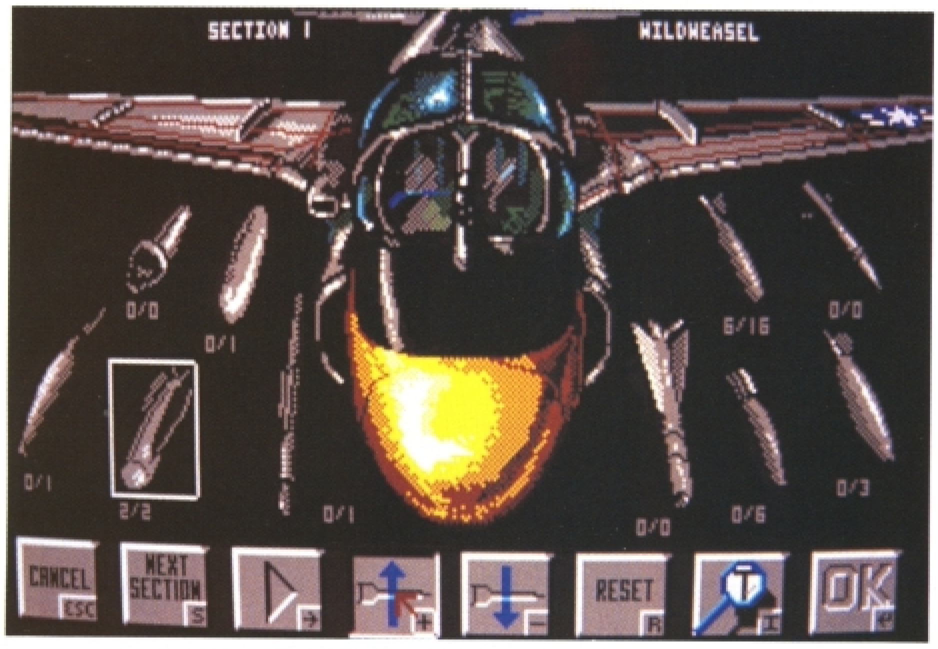
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FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER

Falcon was more than a little popular when it came out so flight sim enthusiasts will be awaiting this sequel with tight jump suits and even tighter sphincters. As well as being a sim, *Flight Of The Intruder* is also a battlefield strategy game set in North Vietnam (along with every film and war sim released in the last six months). Not only do you control the battle scenario itself but you also get a chance to join in, flying either an Intruder or Phantom in the combat sequences. However since 'Individual survival is not the sole measure of success', you may want to keep both feet kept firmly on the ground.

● Available from Spectrum HoloByte/ Mirrorsoft in June on the PC at £34.99. ST and Amiga versions to follow.



BATTLEMASTER

Swiping the Crown Jewels is probably not the easiest way of making your fortune. When the jewels in question are four parts of a gem set in the crowns of kings of the dwarves, elves, humans and orcs you really do seem to be on a highway to nowhere. However, if the future of your world depends on the gems being recovered then there seems little choice but to get on with it. Besides if you don't, you'll never get a chance to see the arcade style graphics and strategy elements contained in this new Fantasy Role Playing game.

● Available from PSS/Mirrorsoft in June on ST, Amiga and PC, price to be announced.



TV SPORTS BASEBALL



Not so much a field of dreams as a statistician's dream, the third in the TV Sports series includes a 162 game season, 25 man rosters and 26 teams. There are arcade sequences for active bods and management sections for active minds. Large animated figures are able to take catches at all positions, or miss them of course. Good Grief!

● Available from Cinemaware/Mirrorsoft, on PC in May (£29.99), Amiga in June (£29.99) and ST in the winter (£24.99).

LAST NINJA II

After completing the really rather popular *Last Ninja* you might have felt that you could put your feet up. After all, 'last' sounds pretty final doesn't it? Well you're back, worse still you're back in Manhattan. Having arrived, there's barely time to adjust your headgear before being plunged into action and adventure as you search for the evil Kunitoki. A ninja's life is not a happy one.

● Available from System 3 in April on ST and Amiga, price £24.99.





KILLING CLOUD

If you think the air's pretty polluted these days, wait 'til you get a load of what's going on in 21st century San Francisco. A toxic cloud has already decimated half the population. And, as a cop, you can't just sit around thinking how much money you wasted on that catalytic convertor. You've got to control the crime wave, the decimated population and the cloud that's causing all the trouble. How do you control a cloud? You find out what or who's causing it, that's how.

● Available from Imageworks/Mirrorsoft this winter on ST, Amiga and PC, price to be announced.

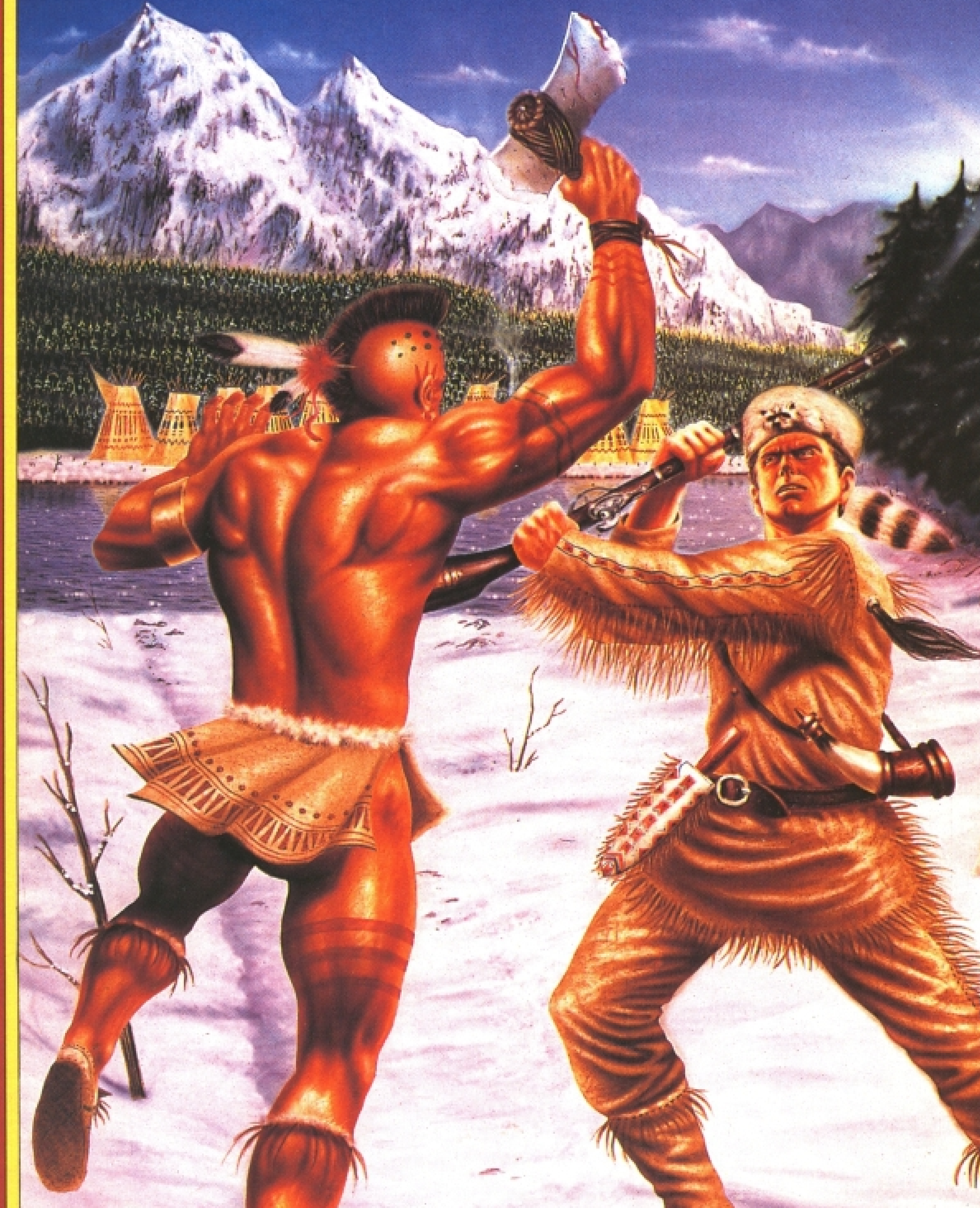
ST CHART

1. **MIDWINTER** Microprose
2. **RAINBOW ISLANDS** Ocean
3. **X-OUT** Rainbow Arts
4. **RISK** Leisure Genius
5. **W.C. BOXING MANGER** Goliath
6. **PLAYER MANAGER** Anco
7. **BLACK TIGER** U.S Gold
8. **SPACE ACE** Empire/Readysoft
9. **SUPERCARS** Gremlin
10. **ROCKSTAR ATE MY HAMPSTER**/Codemaster

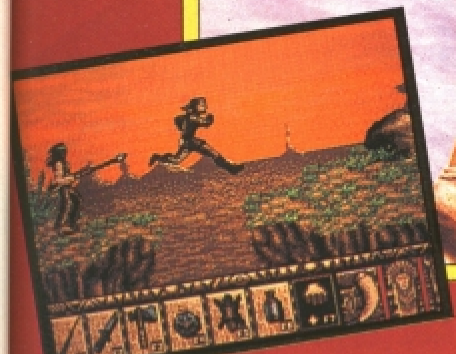
Shipping Charts supplied by the Virgin Computer Games Shop, Virgin Megastore, Oxford Street. Tel. 01-631 1234

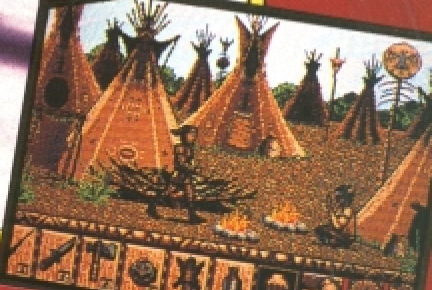
COLORADO

100 SCREENS OF BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED 3D ARCADE ACTION. CANOE THE DEADLY WHITE-WATER RAPIDS OF THE COLORADO AND AXE, KNIFE, SHOOT, AND BOMB YOUR WAY TO A FORTUNE!









Colorado 1880. David O'Brian, a penniless trapper, canoes up the South Platte river in search of adventure and riches.
Deep in the wilderness, he meets a dying Cheyenne Indian. Vowing to bury him in the style of a Warrior, O'Brian is rewarded with an ancient map showing the way to the legendary Lost Gold Mine of Pocahontas.
The route will lead him through Pawnee territory, the most fearsome of Indian tribes, across hostile wolf-infested land... and means he must shoot the terrifying white-water rapids of the Colorado in a flimsy Buffalo-hide canoe.
But there is no going back now for O'Brian is haunted by the scent of Gold.

Silmarils

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LETTERS

How to achieve fame and fortune on the ZERO letters page! Step 1. Nip out and buy a biro, paper, envelope and postage stamp. Step 2. Think of a topic of earth-shattering importance, preferably really serious and boring. Step 3. Use the implements to write a letter. Step 4. Address the envelope to Write To The Ed at ZERO and post it in one of those red pillar box things. Superstardom is just around the corner...

WOT NO WINNERS?

I was reading through issue five of ZERO which I may add is mega brill and I suddenly thought (yes, it's true) 'wow, look at all these fab compos'. My brain then relapsed for a while but then I had another thought. How do us readers know who has won? Please Ed, would it be possible to have a small column dedicated to winners, instead of me having to bite, attack and beg the postman to see if I've won.
Keith Whitehead, Holmfirth, Huddersfield.

Last week the office was declared unfit for habitation under the Health And Safety At Work Act, Section 4, para 2: 'Compo entries must not exceed head height in a working area.' So we thought it was about time to catch up with ourselves and publish the whole lot. So to find out if you've won a cabbage, leaf through to the back of the issue. **Ed.**

ACCOUNTANCY BLUES

As an avid Amiga addict, I feel it my duty to raise the following points. Firstly, why do software houses choose to waste annoyingly large sums of money on advertising? I would suggest that this money would be much better spent on improving software standards in order to get a favourable review in a wonderful mag such as this. After all, what carries more clout with the customer, advertising hype or rave reviews in the computer press?

Secondly, what is the point of wasting phenomenal amounts of cash on generally unimaginative and shallow licences. I'm not all that well versed in copyright laws but it does seem strange that numerous clones have avoided prosecution. Therefore, surely it is more sensible to forget any licence and spend the money on creating original and imaginative software. After all the arcade manufacturers are capable; why is it so unreasonable to suggest that software houses aren't?

Quite honestly, it sickens me that each and every month perfectly good game ideas are being wasted due to lack of effort and poor money management. Money is simply being thrown away because of an obvious lack of understanding of their market.

Please, please Ocean and the like – get your house in order.
Lester Britton, Maidenhead, Berkshire.

Hmmm, this is one of those chicken and egg type situations, I'm afraid. I see your point about money being spent on quality of game rather than advertising and this paying dividends in the ZERO review department, but then again without the revenue generated by advertising, ZERO might not even exist (Gasp! Perish the thought!). Also, I don't really think it's a case of software companies lacking imagination to produce original products. The attraction of an arcade licence for example, is that unlike an original product, a successful arcade title has already proved itself to be a good game and thus potentially a proftitable title on home computers. **Ed.**

HE KNOWS HIS ENIONS

Your mag came onto the 16-bit scene recently. I've got issues one to four. I am particularly impressed by the amount of new reviews, previews and information which you cram into every issue. Each main review contains plenty of different screenshots and I like the way that ST and Amiga versions get separate reviews and comments.

However, your mag has a serious fault. As I read each review I become more and more irate as I search through the ramblings of deranged children or morons trying to find relevant information and facts about the game being reviewed! Over 75% of the text and picture captions contained in each review bear absolutely no relevance to anything about the game at all!

I do have a good and varied sense of humour and I don't mind the occasional odd or witty comment by a reviewer. But as I read stupid comment after insane commentary in your reviews I despair for some relevant facts.

How can you print such utter bull? Did you get all your reviewers from the *Sunday Sport*? So come on. Cut the crap, kick some ass and let's have some reviews containing over 75% fact and useful info. If you do then your promising mag will definitely blow the other 16-bit mags off the shelves. Good riddance to Algy, Binky, Stuffy, Dunc's pet iguana and 'Tour Of Duty'...
M. Enion.

I hope that you won't have any complaints about the review content in this ish. Er... Did you know that of all the lizards, the chameleon's tongue is by far the longest and stickiest. Despite extending the length of the creature's body, it zooms in and out in less than half a second! Oh, and what's all this about irrelevance? **Ed.**

INFAMY! INFAMY! YOU'VE ALL GOT IT IN FOR ME!

Unfortunately, I start this letter with two moans, so here goes. Having taken out a subscription in issue one, I still haven't received my mega cool freebie T-shirt. Is this due to supply problems, administrative screw-ups or some other problem? Or is it just a sinister personal grudge against me?

Moan 2. In issue four, you introduce a new two year subscription thingy with a free game chucked in. Great idea but a bit of a bummer. Can I, with my one year sub, upgrade to the two year jobber by paying the difference? I'm sure I'm not the only person who'd like to do so, so please help us out.

Gripes aside, the mag is excellent. All in all a nice balance of reviews, tips, competitions, iguanas and general mayhem. (Who's he?)

Keep up the good work and long may your bottom remain free of spots.
Don Ten, Salisbury, Wilts.

Answer to moan one: Er... no, we haven't got a personal grudge against you actually.

Answer to moan two: Um, if you haven't received your T-shirt yet, then give June, our subscriptions lady, a ring on 580 8908 and you may still be able to 'upgrade' to a two year sub. Hurrah! **Ed.**

AMNESIACS ANON

Dear Ed,

Oh bloody hell, I've forgotten what I was going to say now.

Yours forgettingly,
Justin Mason, Ryde, Isle Of Wight.

Smeg it. I had a brilliant reply to this one that I jotted down while I was sitting on the toilet yesterday. Anyone seen the bog roll? **Ed.**

WRITE TO THE ED, ZERO, 14 RATHBONE PLACE, LONDON, W1P 1DE.
Star Letter winners receive a ZERO T-shirt! All letters win a ZERO badge.

STOP

ZERO/GREML

Well how do we do it and why don't we stop? This month the magazine that gives you more has joined forces with those awfully nice Gremlin people to bring you a mind-bogglingly good game and a raspingly playable demo. How do we do it? We do it better, that's how.



DEFLEKTOR

COMPLETE GAME

Deflektor players do it with mirrors. *What* do they do we hear you ask. They deflect lasers, that's what and having deflected them they blow their balls apart. Perhaps this needs a tadge of explanation.

Deflektor starts with your laser charging up with energy. Before this charge has run down again you have to guide the laser beam into its receiver. Problem is, all you've got to do this with are a load of mirrors. Mirrors? What do I do with a load of mirrors? Well what you do is position the cursor over any mirror in the laser's path and, by rotating the mirror, change the direction of the beam. Pretty easy? You ain't seen nothing yet! Thing is, the receiver is blocked by a large and very solid looking wall. This wall eventually vanishes, but not until you've used the laser to destroy all the blue balls that litter the screen. These balls of course tend to be hidden in all the most irritating and awkward places. It's up to you to make sure that your laser reaches the places that other lasers just can't reach.

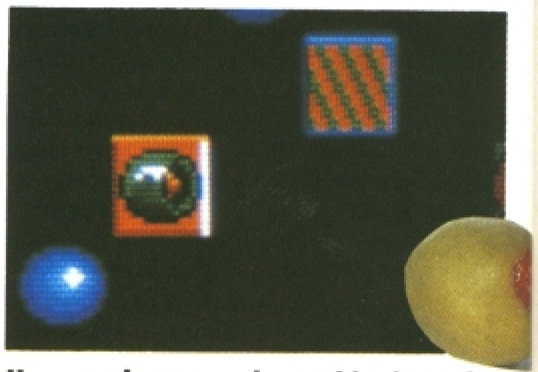
And there's more. The problem with lasers is that they have this nasty tendency to overheat. If you reflect the laser back on itself or fire it over too great a distance, then the sirens do their thang and the overheat dial makes a sprint towards the danger level. If you don't redirect the beam in time then you'll be taking an early bath.

Still sounds too easy? Well, just you wait until you get to the higher levels where the gremlins are lurking. These blighters keep leaping on your mirrors and, before you can say 'Mr Sheen Shines Shiney Surfaces', they've turned your mirror round and all your plans are left upside down.

So now you've got all worried... Well don't panic too much 'cos there's nicies as well as nasties. Some blocks take your beam in and fire it out in a completely different part of the screen. There's also a useful little thingy that fires your beam out in random direction.

Okay, so what have we got? A brain teaser that needs a sharp mind and pretty nifty joystick controls plus a stomping great soundtrack and more colour than in Auntie's sherry trifle. If you don't enjoy it then you must be really rather silly.





Here we have one laser thingie and one stuffed olive. Get them mixed up and you'll have a dud shoot 'em up but a lethal martini.

1. **LASER: This is where it all starts.**
2. **MIRRORS: No, no, stop looking at yourself and start using them to direct the laser.**
3. **BLOCKS: Apart from getting in your way these blocks have a nasty tendency to make you overheat by reflecting your laser straight back at you.**
4. **POLARISER: Harmless shot absorber. Shoot at it while you're trying to think what to do next.**
5. **FIBRE OPTIC: You shoot in here...**
6. **FIBRE OPTIC: and it comes out here. (And vice versa of course.)**
7. **CELLS: Might look like a load of balls but they must all be destroyed before you can complete the circuit.**
8. **REFRACTOR: Fire into one of these and your shot is blasted all over the shop. You'll like these guys.**
9. **MINE: Hitting one of these is a pretty quick way of overheating. You won't like these guys.**
10. **ENERGY LEVEL: Shows you how much energy you've got left and how close you are to overheating.**
11. **SCORE TABLE: Less said, the better.**
12. **RECEIVER: This is where it all ends.**





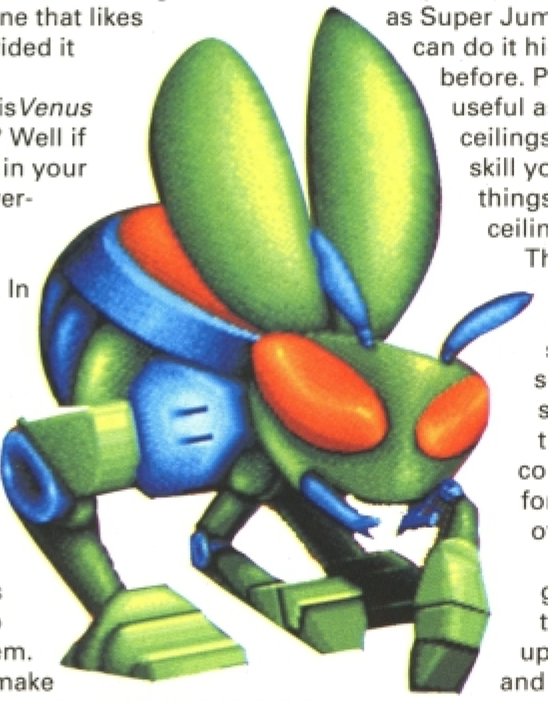
...LN GIVEAWAY*

VENUS

PLAYABLE DEMO

Yes, not only does the world's most generous magazine bring you a mega game but also an even mega-er playable demo of the soon-to-be-released *Venus* from Gremlin. So sit back and enjoy a taste of things to come from the magazine that likes to say yes. (Provided it doesn't hurt.)

So what's this *Venus* thingy all about? Well if you've got bugs in your system, don't over-react, you might make matters a whole lot worse. In *Venus* man has destroyed all forms of insect life through over use of pesticides and chemicals. This may be good news for picnickers but its a bit of a blow to the old eco system. Always keen to make matters worse by a bit of meddling, mankind has created his own species to redress the balance. Result - a new breed of killer insects.



So doomed humanity create a sort of super fly (rather like the legendary fly in the soup). You must control this flying... erm, fly through five levels of horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up.

There are five icons that your fly can walk on as it passes through the game. These provide such useful capabilities as Super Jump which means you can do it higher and further than before. Pretty useful but not as useful as the ability to walk on ceilings. Armed with this nifty skill you can do loads of things such as, erm... walk on ceilings.

Thanks to the skill and generosity of Gremlin you can either watch a sample game or play some demo levels. If you select the play mode, then use the joystick to control up/down forwards/backwards and of course jolly old fire.

We've given you the game, we've given you the instructions, now it's up to you so get out there and get swatting!

WARNING!

DO NOT touch the keyboard or joystick of your computer until it has loaded up these screens. (For *Deflektor* wait until all the squiggly colours have cleared from the screen). Then press fire to start the game.





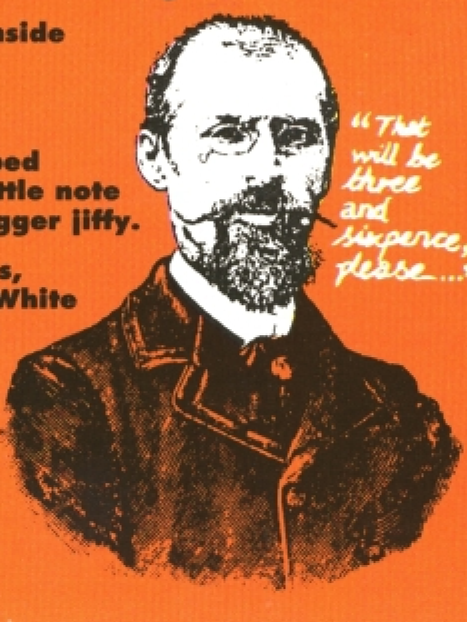
OVERSEAS READERS

You'll probably have noticed that you haven't got a disk on your front cover. Sorry about this – it's due to import restrictions. But hurrah! There is one consolation – you won't have paid as much for the magazine. If you want to receive any cover disks in the future, you'll have to take out a subscription – which is a pretty nifty idea anyway!

DEAR DOKTOR

If you have trouble loading your disk then take the following steps:

1. **Make sure you're loading your disk into an ST or Amiga and not your brand new *CD* player.**
2. **Try resetting the muchine and reloading.**
3. **Remove pet hamster from inside computer.**
4. **Swear. Give up.**
5. **Place the disk, with a stamped addressed jiffy bag and a little note explaining the problem, in a bigger jiffy.**
6. **Send it to ZERO Disk Returns, Copytec, Alban House, 24A White Lane, Flackwell Heath, Nr. High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 9HR.**
7. **Go and buy another copy of ZERO so you can play the games while you're waiting for your new disk.**
8. **Book a three week caravaning holiday in Aldershot.**

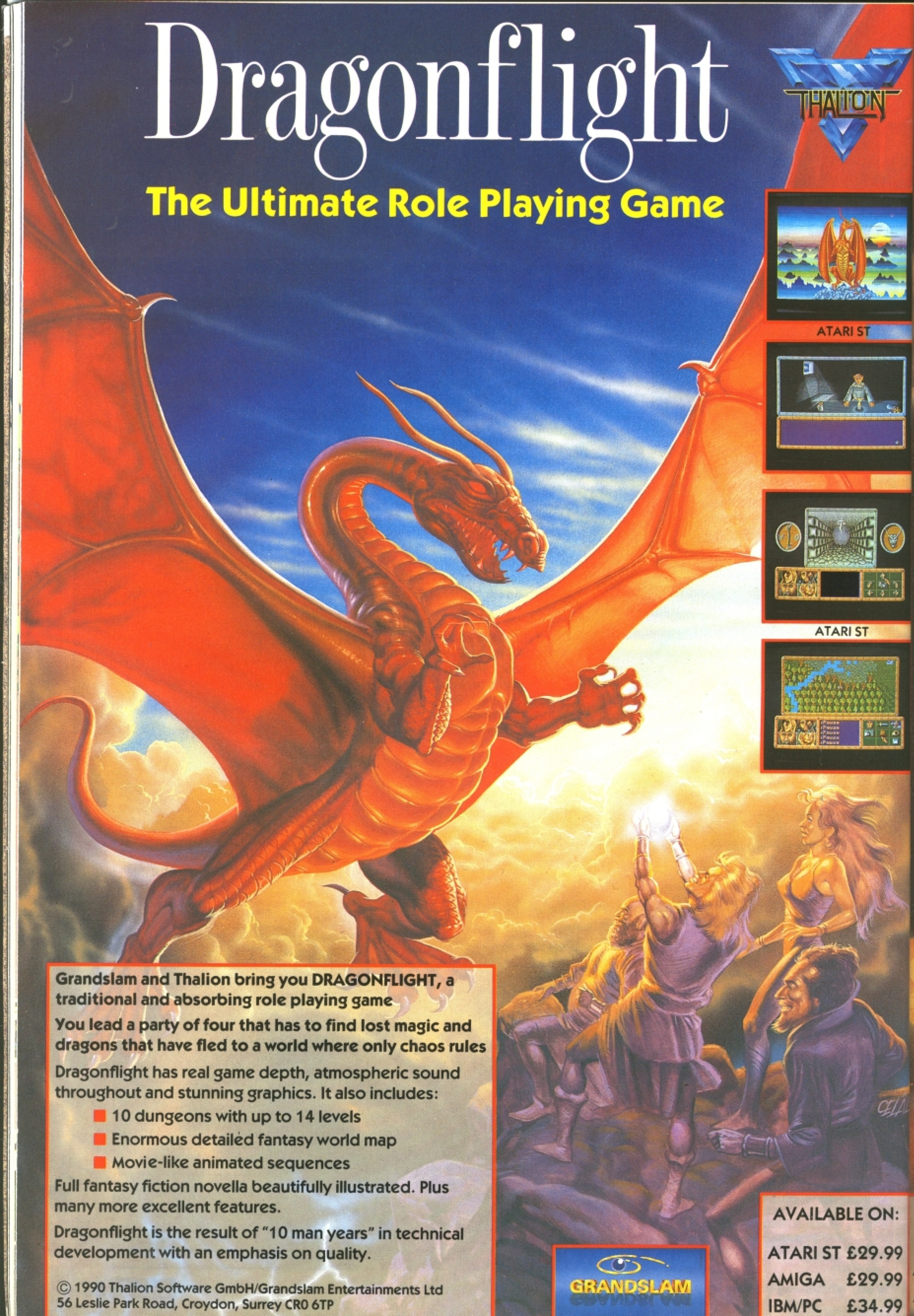


CONTROLS

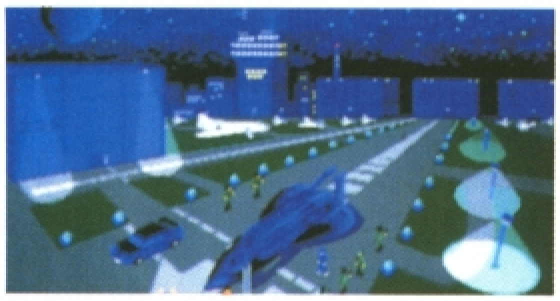
LOADING	Both ST and Amiga versions should auto boot. So put the disk in your computer and then switch it on. If this doesn't work switch on computer first and load via the 'Workbench' type screen.
JOYSTICK	FIRE BUTTON OFF– Cursor moves up/down, left/right. FIRE BUTTON ON– Mirror rotates clockwise/anticlockwise.
KEYBOARD	WITHOUT RETURN– Use keyboard arrows to move cursor. WITH RETURN PRESSED– Keyboard arrows rotate mirror.

STOP

*Well, giveawayish anyway...

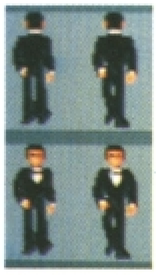

Dragonflight
The Ultimate Role Playing Game
THALION
ATARI ST
ATARI ST
Grandslam and Thalion bring you DRAGONFLIGHT, a traditional and absorbing role playing game
You lead a party of four that has to find lost magic and dragons that have fled to a world where only chaos rules
Dragonflight has real game depth, atmospheric sound throughout and stunning graphics. It also includes:
■ 10 dungeons with up to 14 levels
■ Enormous detailed fantasy world map
■ Movie-like animated sequences
Full fantasy fiction novella beautifully illustrated. Plus many more excellent features.
Dragonflight is the result of "10 man years" in technical development with an emphasis on quality.
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ATARI ST £29.99
AMIGA £29.99
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THALION
LEAVIN'
TERAMIS
ATARI ST
You are Nigel MacGibbons and have been left stranded in a spaceship filled with mutant aliens after a night of heavy alcohol abuse. Not only do you have all those menacing meanies to take into consideration but you also have to make sure that you get to the end of each of the eight segments in time to disable the auto-destruct timer generators that tick away at a positively lethal speed!
Teramis is a vertically scrolling shoot-em-up with detailed graphics, 130 totally different action packed screens through 8 breathtaking levels, super-smooth animation and superb soundtracks.
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56 Leslie Park Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 6TP
AVAILABLE ON:
ATARI ST £19.99
AMIGA £24.99
GRANDSLAM



OPERATION

***Tim Ponting* has always wanted to interview Richard Clayderman. So when the opportunity arose, he flew over to Paris to the headquarters of Delphine Records where they fobbed him off with *Operation Stealth*, the next Cinematique game after *Future Wars*...**



Have you ever tried to get through Customs with a small bag containing more metal than the Eiffel Tower? Two cameras with assorted lenses, tripod, reels of film, Walkman, electric razor, lead Y-fronts... Half an hour later, when the security official was satisfied that I wasn't going to stand up somewhere over the channel shouting 'Ali Akhbar! Take me to Iran!', the plane took off from fog enshrouded London bound for Paris.

After complex negotiations with a taxi driver, I finally arrived at the offices of Delphine as dusk began to settle over the city. Waving a plastic model of the F-19 Stealth Fighter, boss-man Michael Sportouch pushed me into a leather sofa (and I mean *into*) and began to unveil their latest Top Secret project – *Operation Stealth*...



THE THEFT

Imagine how embarrassed the Pentagon would be if a top official was discovered, dressed in a gorilla suit, sharing a jacuzzi with Mary Whitehouse and singing *The Star Spangled Banner* in Russian. They'd be pretty red faced, eh? It'd almost be on a par with discovering that person or persons unknown had penetrated a top secret installation, taken their socks off, overpowered the guards and made their escape in an F-19 Stealth Fighter armed with 'nukular' warheads.

By an incredible coincidence, this is exactly what has happened. The F-19 bit, not Mary Whitehouse. Some dratted agency has made off with a very secret, terribly expensive and unbelievably dangerous piece of military hardware. And the CIA want it back, complete with bombs and a package labelled 'Culprit – handle with extreme cruelty'. It's a hard life in the world of espionage.

THE BRIEFING

Seven am. The wristwatch Videocom is beeping in your ear. Headquarters require your presence urgently. You roll over in bed and try to work out which Soviet double agent you spent the night with before climbing into your standard issue double-oh fronts.

As you drive to the CIA headquarters, you wonder what has happened. Probably the Director's cat has gone missing again. Or Mary Whitehouse has... *(Snip. Ed.)* In the office, the boss sits behind his desk fiddling with his latest executive toy. He is brutally frank, despite the fact his name is Jeremy: "Somebody has stolen the F-19 Stealth Fighter and its nukular payload. Find out who did it and bring the plane back. And if you so much as tear the plastic seat covering, your head's on the block."

He hands you a top secret dossier labelled 'Top Secret Dossier'. He then hands you a plane ticket and tells you to pack an overnight bag with a false bottom. As you pause at the door, he speaks solemnly: "The security of our beloved United States depends on the success of your mission. The President himself wishes you luck." Golly.

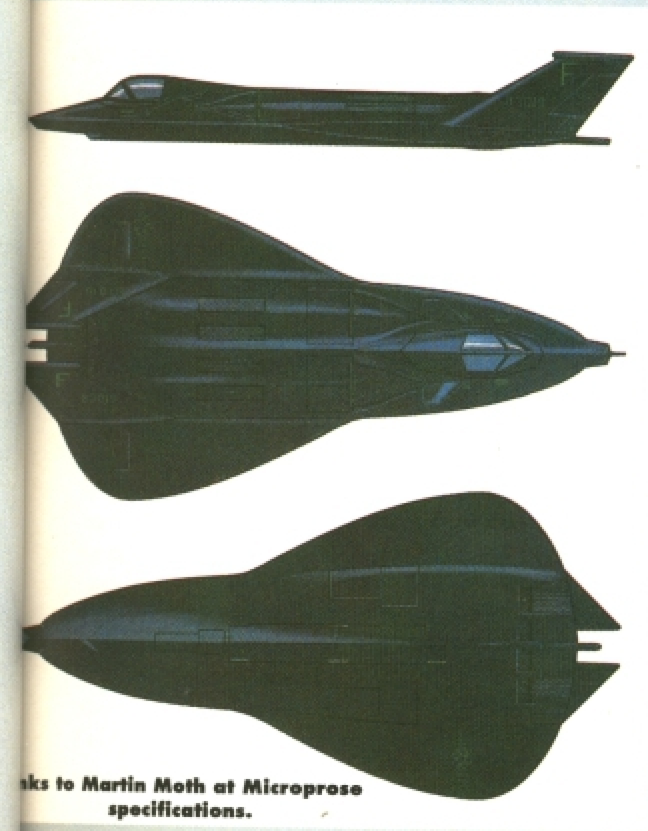


***Operation Stealth* not only plays like a film script but was also written in much the same way. A complete storyboard was put together which was passed on to the graphic artists who transferred the background designs to the screen.**

TOP SECRET DOSSIER*

STEALTH

COPIES TO: THE PRESIDENT, HEADS OF CIA AND THE PENTAGON, AGENT JOHN GLAMES (THE ONE WITH THE FLARES).



...ks to Martin Moth at Microprose ... specifications.

THE F-19 STEALTH FIGHTER

Designer/ Manufacturer: Lockheed, USA
Role: Stealth Strike Fighter
Crew: One
Wing Span: 31 feet 8 inches
Overall Length: 59 feet
Overall height: 13 feet 2 inches
Mission weight at take-off: 17 tons
Engines: Two General Electric F404-GE-100A turbofans
Range: 520 miles
Ceiling: 64,000 feet
Maximum speed at 0 feet: 530 kts (Mach 0.8)
Maximum speed at 36,000 feet: 640 kts (Mach 1.1)

PAYLOAD

Fully operational nuclear warheads detailed in Top Secret Document P45 contained in four internal weapon bays with maximum combined load of 6,000 lbs.

CRISIS SITUATION

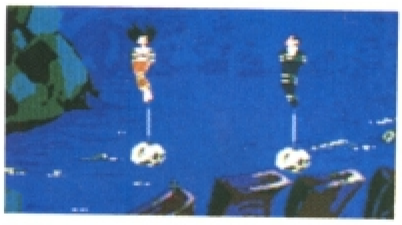
An F-19 Stealth Fighter with full nuclear payload has been stolen from the Burbank airbase by person or persons unknown. It was carrying very little fuel, so it must be hidden in territory close to the USA, possibly in South America or the Carribean. (See 'Suspects' notes appended.)

ACTION ALREADY TAKEN

Operation Wally: an advert was placed in the *New York Times* asking for the plane to be returned. Operation failed.

Operation Stealth: CIA Agent John Glames has been fully briefed. His mission is to discover the unknown agency who stole the plane and recover it.

*This page will self-destruct in 20 seconds so put that pair of oven gloves on – quick!



THE POLITICAL SITUATION

Your dossier contains notes briefing you on the present political climate and giving you clues as to who might be responsible for the pickle the Pentagon finds itself in. First, there's Moscow. East-West relations are good at the moment; Gorby has given his assurance that they're not involved in the affair. Top political analysts reckon that it wouldn't be in his interests to jeopardise disarmament talks by nicking a plane.

On the other hand, the CIA know that the USSR has been developing its own Stealth technology. How do they know? Because the head of the project defected to the West. And with his departure, the Soviets fell behind in the race for the ultimate clandestine strike aircraft. So they could well be interested in knowing how their opponents are faring...

The second party who might or might not be involved is General Manigua, dictator of the tiny South American country of Santa Paragua. He was elected many years before and seemed a pretty decent President chappie. But something went wrong. He started torturing people and even programmed 24 hour Australian soaps on national TV. People particularly objected to the latter and various rebel groups emerged, clamouring for an end to *Neighbours* and dictatorship. The US government agreed and began supplying the partisans with military aid and 16mm footage of *Miss Santa Paragua 1988* (which is what they all



Eek! What on earth is a Brixton mini-cab doing in South America?



'Privado'. *Privado*... erm, I think that means 'Bog Off'.

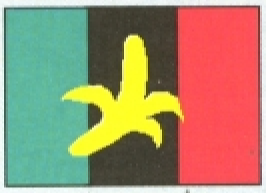
THE SUSPECTS

THE KGB



The KGB has already been contacted and denies any involvement with the theft of the F-19. In the current climate of co-operation and disarmament, it seems unlikely that they are responsible. But you never know with the pesky Ruskies.

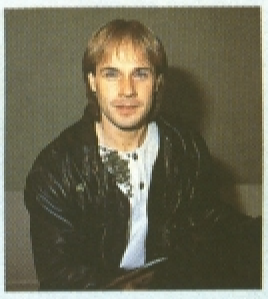
GENERAL MANIGUA



The South American country of Santa Paragua is targetted as the most likely hiding place for the F-19. Relations with its dictator, General Manigua, have been deteriorating over the past few months and he has repeatedly threatened US citizens resident in the country. *Operation Stealth* will begin here.

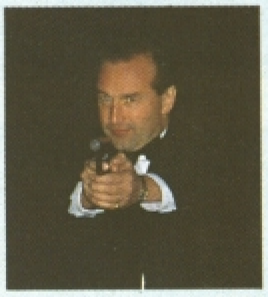
THE DELPHINE HEROES

DICKIE CLAYDERMAN



Ivory tinkler who sings lots of songs about life on the hard shoulder. Considered an international sex symbol and described by Mrs D. Pudgeley of Southend as 'spanking hot stuff'. Sells records in over 60 different countries, including Japan and New Zealand where he is frequently mistaken in the street for a talented musician. Used to be a market research assistant for a revolutionary new hair replacement programme.

JOHN GLAMES



Secret Agent, licensed to kill and collect wild flowers. Considered by the CIA to be one of their finest operatives after 'Operation Carpet Slipper' during which he located a chocolate digestive declared Missing In Action, Vietnam 1968. No stranger to the politics of the Cold War, he can say 'not tonight, pussycat' in seven different Eastern European languages. Believed to have a double in the KGB who masquerades as a leading authority on pressed flowers.



wanted to watch anyway). In fact, so great is the current support for the rebels that it is rumoured that Manigua's own daughter is one of their leaders...

THE GAME

If anything, *Operation Stealth* is executed with even more finesse and atmosphere than *Future Wars*, the first game Delphine produced using the Cinematique system. It kicks off with an opening sequence in which you watch an agent penetrating the secret airbase and making off with the F-19. You share the angst of the control tower technicians as it disappears off the radar screens before you are transported to the beginning of the game 'proper', in character as John Glames, for a briefing in your chief's office. He presents you with an air ticket and off you tootle to Santa Paragua, armed to the teeth with secret agents' gadgets and a years' supply of Old Spice.

Once in Santa Paragua, you have to get past customs and passport control before you can begin investigations. A tiny tipette: US citizens aren't terribly popular with Santa Paraguan officials, so how about a new passport?...

That's about all that can be said without 'giving the game away'. But unlike *Future Wars*, if you get hopelessly stuck at any stage, there is a help function that gives you hints as you play. To stop you from using it too much, it will involve some element that'll make it a complete bore to access: swopping disks, translating a colour-coded message, something like that.

Interspersed through the game are arcade sequences, including a canoeing bit and a section where you have to swim through a system of interconnected caverns. Unfortunately, you can only come up for air at certain points, so you either need lungs the size of an African elephant or nifty wibble stick skills. Or preferably both.

Our hero creeps up behind Victor Kiam during the filming of a Remington Lektro Blade ad. This sequence is actually pretty clever because if you take the wrong route across the room, he'll notice you in the mirror and draw a gun from his boxers. Cooo!



Ooer! This geezer in a dirty mac wants to show me some puppies...



CINEMATIQUELY SPEAKING

In the course of the ten million phone calls they've received asking for tips on *Future Wars*, the Delphine bods have sussed out various ways to improve the Cinematique game system. The biggest criticism of *Future Wars* was that positioning had to be pixel perfect to carry out various actions. Every few seconds, the message 'move a little closer' appeared on screen, driving players to acts of mindless violence. This has all changed. Now, if (for example) you wish to EXAMINE an object, you merely click on it and the hero will move automatically to the right spot. Not only that, but you can carry several objects at once which may be examined and used at any stage in the game.

Another improvement allows you to examine all objects more closely by means of 'blown up' views. For example, if you want to take a closer look at the attaché case you're carrying, a magnified image of it appears,

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rather handily on screen.

The hero (complete with flares based on CIA standard issue ankle-flappers) and supporting cast are all drawn in a cartoony style. When a fight breaks out, it's just like *Popeye* – limbs randomly flying about, the hero seeing stars and someone ending up in a crumpled heap on the floor. The game overall features far more animation than *Future Wars* and has more of an action feel to it.

Future Wars proved to Delphine that it could come up with an adventure game that appealed to the most hard-ened arcade nut. Now with *Operation Stealth*, they've improved the game system to such an extent that it's going to make even more waves. So if you feel Sean Connery can't quite cut it any more, fancy your chances against a South American banana republic (or the KGB) and own a tuxedo and flares, then watch the software shelves in May...

FUTURE GAMES

Operation Stealth is the first game in a 'Sécret Défense' series ('Top Secret' in English), which is to have a secret service theme. Okay, so it's James Bond really but I not allowed to say that. Oh dear, I just have. The second game will follow early in 1991.

The next project Delphine are working on for 1990 is a 'police game' in which you play a Hercule Poirot-esque investigator *(Eh? Ed.)* on board a rich playboy's cruise ship. The game will be completely non-linear (unlike *Future Wars*) with different avenues of investigation available at the same time.

Next up is a game with a more mystic theme, the scenario written by the designer of Infogrames' *Drakkhen*. "It will be about a devil worshipping cult," explains Michael, "very bloody. It's a huge scenario, a very dark game. It's a big gamble because while games involving aliens and secret agents are easy to market, this is more of a risk."



And finally, *Future Wars II* will be hitting monitors all over Europe next Christmas. You'll see it first in ZERO.

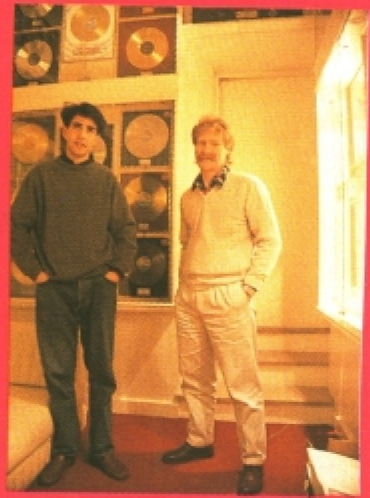
STOP

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Operation Stealth
PUBLISHER	Delphine/Palace
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	May

DELPHINITELY THE BUSINESS

Michael Sportouch has had a busy time over the past few years. Besides working in several computer stores around Paris and attending college, he programmed the original *Space Harrier*. Then he founded French games bible *Generation 4* and as Editor made it one of the leading French magazines. A bigwig at Delphine Records was so impressed with *Space Harrier* that he decided to launch a software subsidiary to be run by Michael. Delphine has fingers in all sorts of pies, including Richard Clayderman the well known sweetie-pie and darling of grannies everywhere. And the rest, as they say, "c'est histoire".

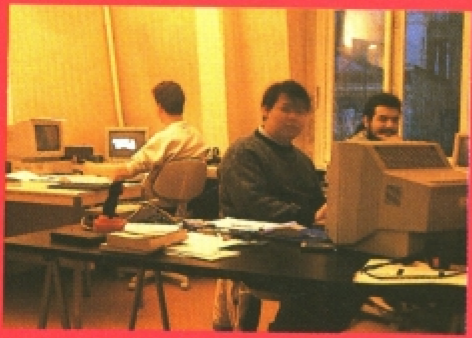


Michael from Delphine shows Pete from Palace his Richard Clayderman collection.

Delphine's first game was *Bio-Challenge*, followed by *Castle Warrior* and the now legendary *Future Wars*, which sold more copies than *Falcon* or *Dungeon Master* in France.

Now that he's reached the ripe old age of 20, Michael has time to sit back and reflect: "French games used to have a rather bad image in the rest of Europe, especially in England. We're helping to forge a new image for French software."

The company is committed to fully developing the Cinematique system under Paul Cuisset, top programming dude.



Qweek! It's a journaleest! Turn oeuf 'Les Jeunes Docteurs'!

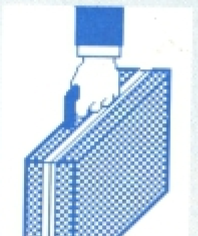
***Operation Stealth* is crucial to the future of the company. "It's the most important game for us. After *Future Wars*, everybody is waiting for it. If this is successful, we will then go on to develop an entire Cinematique sequence." The graphics are being put together by Michelle Bacquet, who did *Ivanhoe* for Ocean and Daniel Hochard, with programming by Paul himself and Phillipe Chastel, who was involved with the *Castle Master* project. The front end, an extensive animated sequence not entirely unlike *Afterburner*, has been designed by Emanuel Lecoz. And on the sound credits are Jean Baudlot and Marc Minier, who both work for the record company.**



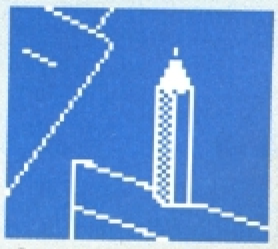
Blimey! It's Sir Francis Drake! *(Er, no actually. It's Emanuel Lecoz. Ed.)*

INSPECTOR GADGET

In true James Bond style, John Glames is equipped with a number of gadgets to help him nail the thieves and generally trog about doing secret-agenty type things.



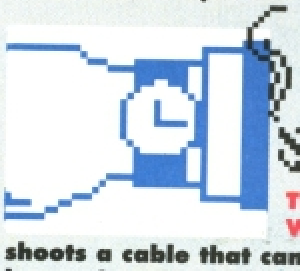
THE ATTACHÉ CASE: has a false bottom (rather like Cher, really) concealing a machine that manufactures false passports. Useful in a country where a US citizen is as popular as a pig-breeder in a synagogue.



THE ACID PENCIL: comes in a very attractive psychedelic paisley design and plays acid music. *(Actually, it pumps acid that will eat through locks. Acid House Ed.)*



EXPLODING CIGARETTES: do more damage to your lungs than 200 Woodbines. These carry a government health warning: 'These cigarettes can seriously damage your head'.

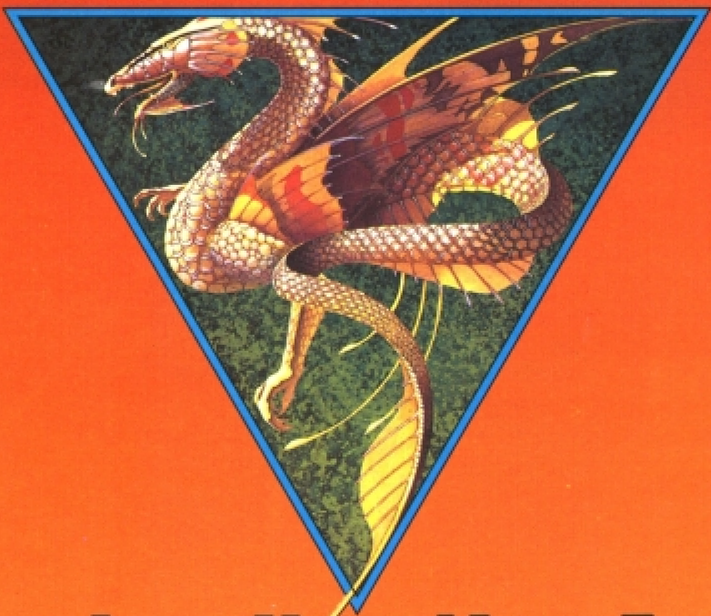


THE WATCH: shoots a cable that can then be used to climb between buildings and things.



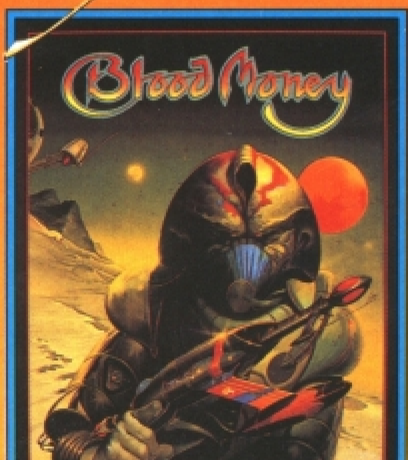
ARCADE · ACTION · ADVENTURE

T'RI'A'D



VOLUME · 3

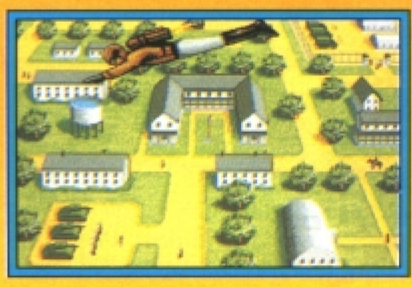












Speedball - total action - total aggression - the ultimate sport from the Bitmap Brothers.

Computer Gamesweek - 94%
"Speedball is fast, furious and graphically very stylish"

The One - 90%
"Never in the field of reviewing has such an excellent game been played by so many for so long. A must buy!"

C&VG Hit -
"Speedball is going to be a monster hit"

ST/Amiga Format Gold Disk Award! - 90%
"This game is so visually brilliant and possesses those classic addictive qualities that once you've picked up your joystick you just won't want to put it back down again".

C + VG Hit!
"If you're into missiles, bombs and explosions in large, classy quantities, Blood Money is a game you should try and buy without delay".

ZZAP - 94%
"Save every penny you can get your hands on and acquire Rocket Ranger".

Amiga Format - 90%
"Those who like a good puzzle and a bit of strategy will find Rocket Ranger compulsive".

Ace Rating - 814
"Superb graphics with arcade action and strategy - probably the best Cinemaware game yet".

New Computer Express
"Break out a spare can of Buddy and pop up your PC for this one".

image works · The BITMAP BROTHERS · PSYGNOSIS · CINEMAWARE · MIRROR Soft

Distribution by: Mirrorsoft Ltd., Irwin House, 118 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SW

AMIGA/ATARI ST/PC £29.99

ZERO reviews

CRITICS' CORNER

At last it can be revealed – in the Summer of 1989, the ZERO team tried to reach the South Pole. Why did each individual want to be included in the expedition to such a cold and barren (and useless) wilderness? Let's find out.



Tim 'Cozy Powell' Ponting: Expedition Leader Tim had but one objective – to be the first person to make lots of little dents in the south polar icecap. To this end he filled his sled with drumsticks of all weights and materials: plain wood ones, aluminium ones and quite a few of those funny long ones with the little plastic bobble bits on the end. "It'll be just like *Hansel And Gretal*," he beamed as he shuffled forward tapping a rapid 4/4 into the hard crystalised snow – referring to the fact that the return journey would be easier to make with a trail of indentations to follow.



David Wilson: The expedition ship (which took the team from Southampton to the Filchner Ice Shelf) was overcrowded thanks to David's sled, which wasn't actually a 'sled' at all – his reason for taking part was to be the first person to arrive at the magnetic pole in a red Triumph Herald convertible. So confident was David that he even painted a 'flashy' *Starsky And Hutch* white stripe down the side of the car. Unfortunately, as soon as it was lowered onto the ice shelf, the Herald suffered two severe punctures – and how many spare tyres had David taken? One (the clot). He had to hitch a ride with the demon percussionist (i.e. Tim).



Lord Paul Lakin: Unbelievably over-educated toff Paul knew exactly why he was going – and the answer was 'flags'. Having attended both Oxford *and* Cambridge, he'd attained a first class honours degree in Flags Of The World. He knew them all – he was a vexillologist of the first order. So who better to design the expedition flag and be the person to actually plant it on site? David? No, Paul you clot. And what a design it was – a tapestry flag depicting the invention of the refrigerator (in bas-relief). "It's sort of a celebration," he said, "of mankind creating its own artificial 'coldness' and harnessing the energy to make vegetables last longer".



Duncan MacDonald: One of Dunc's heroes (we're always telling you he's bonkers) is Captain Scott (?). Anyway, he wanted to make sure the expedition was a total failure, so he took a leaf out of Captain Scott's book and made himself responsible for the clothing and footwear used in the mammoth trek. Like Scott he decided to choose a material with the lowest possible tog* rating, to ensure limited survival of the members. And he hit gold. The team shivered in agony with every frost-bitten step of the journey – kitted out in chiffon body-stockings and 'booties'. Chiffon was also used extensively in the fabric of all the sleeping bags and the tent.



David 'McVicca' McCandless: Violent offender Dave's sled was literally packed to overflowing with guns, nail-bombs and mortars. He obviously wasn't planning yet another massive bank heist, as the route to the pole didn't encompass any branches of Nat West (or any other bank for that matter). The other chiffon-clad members of the expedition couldn't fathom the reason for all this firepower – until one day a 'herd' of penguins was spotted in the distance. Within 80 seconds it had been reduced to a pile of smouldering feathers. Dave packed his weapons back in his sled, did an about turn and started walking to the ship – muttering that 'he'd done what he came to do'.



Richard Pelley: Richard, like Duncan, decided to take a leaf out of Captain Scott's book: he wanted to experiment with the means of pulling his sled – Scott had proved that tractors were a bad idea, as were horses. Richard had a better idea. When his sled was lowered from the ship onto the ice shelf, the other party members were surprised to see, attached to it, a team of iguanas. "But they're reptiles – they're cold blooded" chided everybody in unison. Richard explained that he realised this, and intended to – every time they expired – pick them up and warm their blood using the flame from a candle.

***Tog: a unit of thermal retainment. An eiderdown duvet will keep you quite warm and has a high tog rating (about 12). The clothing Scott took to the Antarctic had a tog rating of 3 (the silly sausage).**

WHAT'S WHAT

Still not 'au fait' with the scoring system? Well this is for your benefit so you'd better pay attention.



Games are marked out of 100 on four criteria; **Graphics, Sound, Addictiveness** and **Execution**. The first three are fairly self-explanatory but Execution may need clarifying. Is the scrolling really special for instance? Are all the sections of the game neatly tied together, showing a lot of care and thought on the part of the programmers? If so **Execution** will score well here. If you can't be bothered with all that then the **Overall Mark** gives you an at a glance summary. Now if we've said it once we've said it a thousand times... This mark is not an average of the other scores necessarily but a consideration of every conceivable factor!

A game scoring 90 or above in the non-average Overall Mark department gets the coveted **ZERO HERO** award (which is a bit of a toff way of saying 'buy it'.) Separate from the other scores (but not unconnected to them) is the **HASSLE FACTOR**. Are there 400 disk changes every pico second? Do you have to go through a boring title sequence before restarting? Things like that score here and they're marked out of 10.

Each review also contains a **WHAT'S WHAT** box which is basically a box which tells you... er what's what in relation to price format and release date.

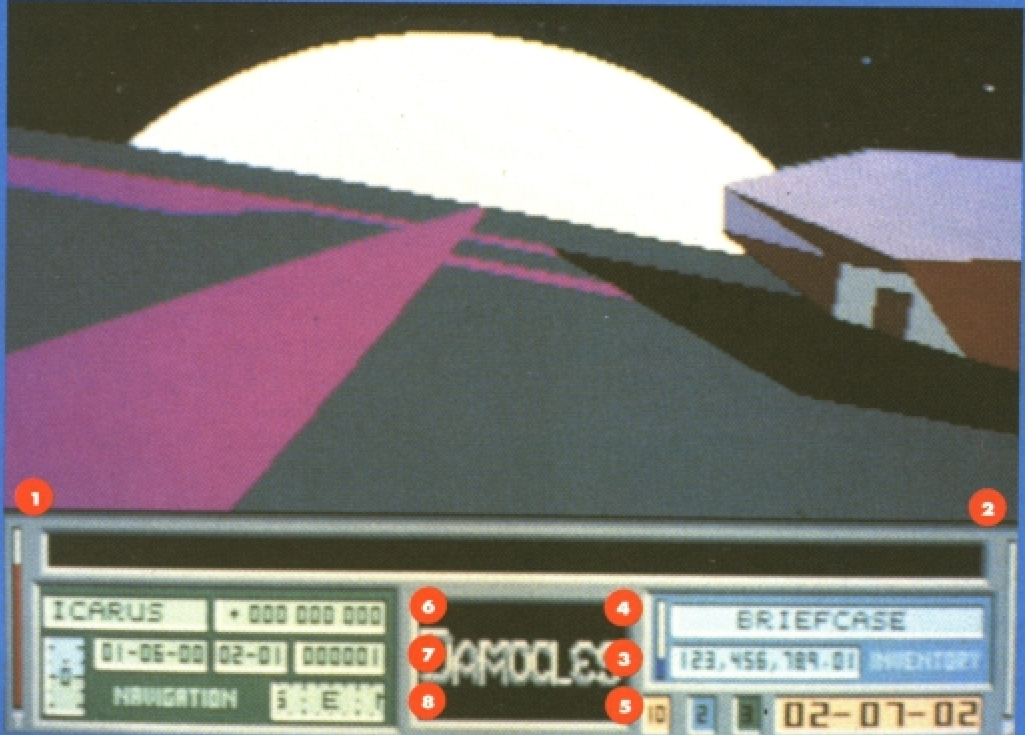
Well that's that for the main reviews but let's not forget the others. Then there's the **DÉJÀ VU** section. Here you'll get reviews of new releases we've already had a look at on other formats. The **PRICE IS RIGHT** section is where you'll find the budget games reviewed. They only get an overall score instead of a more detailed analysis. This is because er... they're cheap.

review

DAMOCLES

ZERO HERO

It's been a long time coming, but the wait is finally over – the sequel to *Mercenary* is here at last. And it's not a moment too soon for *Duncan MacDonald* (who successfully 'Escaped From Targ' absolutely yonks ago).



SHEDDING LIGHT ON DAMOCLES

1 **2** **The atmospheres on some of the planets and moons that you visit may not be particularly conducive to sustaining life, so it's a good idea to keep your eye on the pressure and temperature bars.**

3 **It's worth making loads of dosh because even if money won't buy you happiness, the chances are that it'll still buy you a spanky spacecraft (or something).**

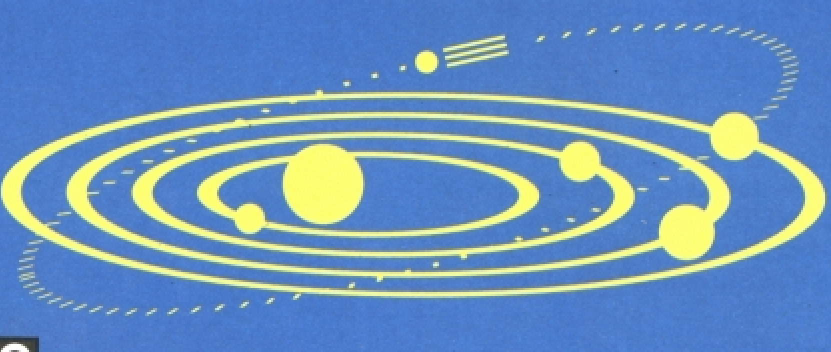
4 **The inventory system is a marked improvement over that of *Mercenary*. If you want to use an object that you picked up ages ago, you don't have to drop all the ones you've collected since, before you can get at it. Just cycle through the inventory window – the object highlighted is the one that can be manipulated.**

5 **The time left readout ticks down and reminds you that Damocles is on its way.**

6 **Speed of whatever craft you're occupying.**

7 **Altitude of whatever craft you're occupying.**

8 **The navigation co-ordinates are rather helpful and stop you getting lost in the cities (as anyone who's played *Mercenary* will appreciate).**

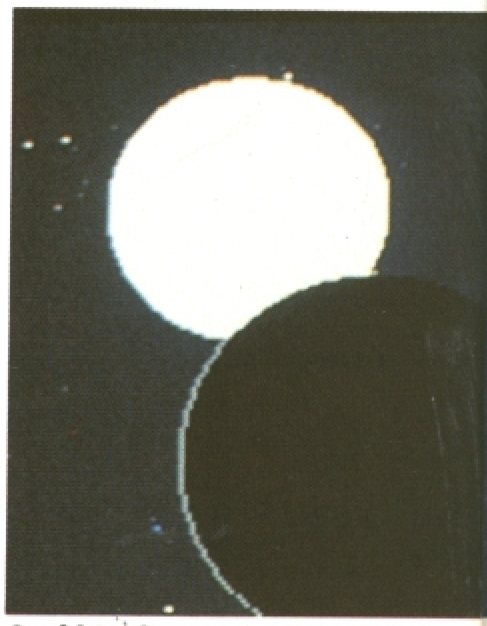


There aren't many games that achieve enormous cult following. There's *Elite*, obviously. And *Populous* springs to mind (of course). Now, what was that other one? Er, ah y – *Mercenary*. An arcade adventure crossed with a 'low-level' flight simulat – it was one of those totally engrossing games that appealed to fans of all genr In fact it was so good that surely a sequ couldn't really be that much better. Cou it? Well, with Paul Woakes and Novager on the case, there was always the chan that it really might be possible. And it was. Even the blurb on the back of the packaging is good...

"Visiting Dionysius, King of Syracus Damocles expressed his admiration of what he imagined to be a most gratifyi experience – the ruling of a kingdom. Dionysius was later to provide a power demonstration of his own view of the reality of Kingship. Whilst seated at a feast, Damocles discovered that a swor had been suspended directly above his head. It was held only by a single hair."

So there you have it. That's what the sword of Damocles represents – imminent danger – which is what you face from the word go in the game itsel

You find yourself in the Gamma sola system, a system comprising a sun (Dialis), nine major planets and ninetee moons. Unfortunately, if you don't get your act together, it'll be losing one of those planets before the end of the day There's a comet, you see, called Damocles – and if it continues on its present trajectory it's going to smash in Eris, the fifth planet. Your humble task i to work out a way to stop this happenin Er, blimey. Quite a tall order, when you really get to thinking about it. In *Mercenary* you were confined to one planet, Targ, which you only left at the end of the game (if you completed it, th is). Not so in *Damocles*. After all, what's the point of programming an entire working solar system if you don't get to



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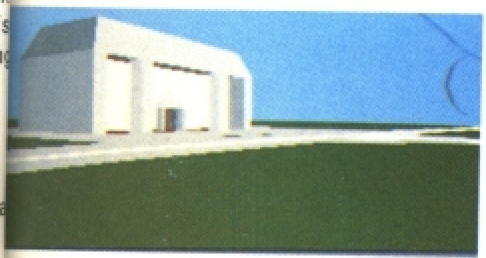
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"What do you make of this screenshot, Benson?" "Looks to me as though you had a hair on the top right of the lens."

ly around in it? No point is the answer, so you'll be glad to hear that you can fly around in it. Anywhere you want. And you need to, because this is an arcade adventure, which means there are clues to be gleaned from certain locations, and items to pick up all over the shop.

So anyway, there you are in the start location of Eris (the planet that's going to get pranged by the comet, remember?). You've just been through an orchestrated start sequence in which Benson, your on-board 9th generation PC, has been chatting away to you via his scrolling text box while your ship zooms through space and descends onto the planet's surface. Once landed you're informed that basically the spacecraft you've been using is actually quite clapped out and shouldn't really be flown again. (It's a bit like a Dan Air BAC1-11.) So it's time to get out and walk. Ho hum. Well, you do still have Benson with you, and he really is a mine of information: telling you where you need to go to pick up the trail that'll lead you to a new spaceship (amongst other things). He also tells 'jokes'. Actually, Benson's something of a wag – his personality has come on quite a bit since *Mercenary*. Anyway, following Benson's sound advice a car can be easily found, boarded, and the adventure is well underway.



Hasn't Prince Charles got something to say about this architecture?

Just driving around on Eris is great fun in itself as it happens. Plus you can park next to a building and sit back and watch as the Sun (sorry, er, the star Dialis) slowly sets in the distance. (The moons rise and set as well. Don't forget – you're in a real working solar system, all the planets have days and nights. And if you stand on a moon you can watch planet-rise. It's all in there). If you get out of the car you can stroll into the building you're parked next to and catch a lift up to the top floor. Once there you can saunter through the sliding doors and find the front window. Oooh, look. there's the car, down below. Coo. Moon-rise in the distance. Uh-oh, we've forgotten that there's a comet heading for the planet. It's so easy to forget the urgency of the mission with all these distractions. Right – back to the car then (after checking out the rest of the rooms in the building to see if there are any collectable objects). And so the quest continues, but to tell you more would be to give little bits of the game away – which would spoil things. Suffice to say that there are absolutely loads of vehicles to be found, and more objects than you could shake the receding edges of the universe at. And, as you'll have gathered by now, they're not all on Eris!



This bit will look familiar to *Mercenary* players: where you crash at the start.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Damocles
PUBLISHER	Novagen
PRICE	£24.95
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	Out now

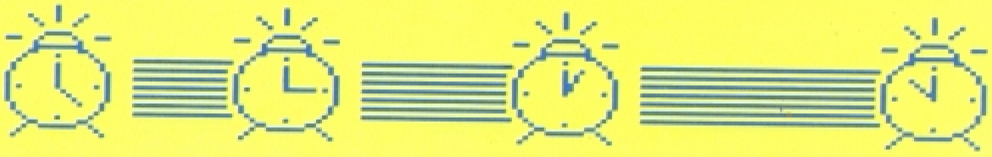


pse! Mind you
mmon as muck

MOVING CLOCKS GO SLOW



***Damocles* is full of billions of nice little touches, and here's one of them. In the space sequences, while travelling between the planets, you have to accelerate up to near light speeds (otherwise it'd take ages to get from one planet to another). While at this high speed, if you take a look at the timer (which gives you the ETA of Damocles) you'll see it going all wibbly. Basically it speeds up, which is due to relativity. As Einstein proved, 'moving clocks go slow', so from your point of view (in the space ship) time seems to be ticking away normally. But outside the ship it's a different bowl of bananas altogether – time is passing like billy-ho. And your timer reflects this. So the more extensively you travel around the solar system, the less time you have to solve the problem. Yo ho!**



Dunc: Space is quite big really. It's much bigger than, er, Italy for instance. And it's not shaped like a boot either. So where exactly in space is the game set then? Well, if you stand in the middle of Bernard Matthews' Norfolk turkey farm and point a powerful telescope in the direction of Macclesfield, then up to an angle of 77° you'll see a blue star (as long as it's night time and there aren't any clouds, that is). Directly behind this blue star, and 22 light years further away, is a white star called Dialis. Orbiting Dialis are nine planets and their associated moons – and a rogue comet called Damocles. A right old scamp of a comet, in fact, with devilish intentions – the planet Eris is doomed. Can you save it? Er, probably not if you're anywhere near as crap at these things as I am, but it's worth a bash, isn't it? After all, it's worth buying *Damocles* (the game, not the comet you clot) just to fly around the solar system in the spaceship (mind you, you've got to find it first). If you fail to discover the method of halting Damocles before it hits Eris, it doesn't actually matter (that much), even after Eris has been destroyed you can still travel to all the other planets in the system to carry on with your exploration.

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
One disk, memory resident, hurrah!

If you've played the prequel (and more than half of you probably have) then you'll know the basic formula: collect objects, work out what exactly they're for and then take them and 'use' them in the correct place. Unfortunately sussing out what things are for is the problem. In *Mercenary,* I carried the 'cheese' around for ages, thinking it was probably a key to a door somewhere. It wasn't. It was an aircraft – I could have got in it and flown places. *Damocles* contains more of the same. I can guess where the pressure suit might come in handy, but what about 'the television'? Your guess is as good as mine. Maybe it's a red herring, maybe it isn't.

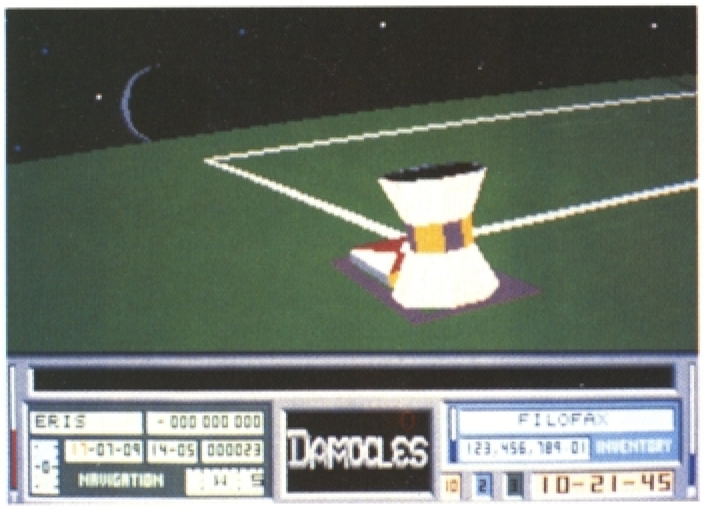


Blimey! Talk about avant-garde architecture! It makes the Lloyds building look like a thing of the past!

Anyway, I don't want to give away what objects are hidden in the game or where you can find them, but you will want to know about the quality of the graphics, won't you? Well, absolutely first class is the answer. Everything scrolls as smoothly as you'd expect, and all the objects and buildings are beautifully detailed. Just look at the screenshots. All the planets and moons have differently styled dwelling places on the surface. Some are contained in cities the size of the one in the original game, while others are scattered about in smaller 'villages'. A couple of the worlds have island colonies dotted about in giant oceans (and landing in these seas sees your craft bobbing about like, erm, like, er, like something that bobs about on a bit of water. Erm, a duck or something?) *(Get on with it. Ed.)* Anyway, the cities and towns are as diverse and varied as you could hope for. And now we're back to the actual working solar system. Watching a sunrise on Icarus (the innermost planet) is fantastic. An absolutely gigantic blinding white sphere (Dialis) inches its way above the horizon. You feel yourself reaching for the Ambre Solaire. The same can't be said about the outermost planet. Sunrise on that world isn't quite as awesome – with a distant and diffused little blob of brightness barely penetrating the atmosphere. You really feel the planet is cold and gloomy. Yes, all the graphics are superb. As for the gameplay itself, well, what can I say? This certainly isn't one you'll get bored with in a hurry. We're talking real moneysworth here. I didn't think it was possible, but what it really comes down to is this – *Damocles* takes *Mercenary* and goes to the toilet on it! STOP



Now, if I could only find a car, I could make use of the lovely road systems.



Oooh! There's a cooling tower! Shall we fly into it?

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	94
S	SOUND	85
A	ADDICTIVENESS	94
E	EXECUTION	94

• 20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

A corker of an arcade adventure with totally engrossing gameplay. *Damocles* is *Mercenary* to the power three!

93

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review

WORLD CUP SOCCER '90

The World Cup is upon us so *Paul 'Hand of God' Lakin* takes down his boots, pulls on a pair of baggy shorts and prepares to play Virgin's *World Cup Soccer '90.*



Only this bunch of permed posers stand between you and cup glory. Yippee!!

Hmm it seems like only four years ago that England was doing really rather badly in the World Cup. Now it's here again which means suffering all the usual build-up, endless repeats of the '66 Final, Bryan Robson injured and more footie games than you can shake a jolly large stick at. Virgin is the company with the actual World Cup title, though their game is in fact a conversion of an arcade game called *World Trophy Soccer.* It was converted onto 16-bit by a Hungarian software house. Football's a funny old game.

At the beginning of *World Cup Soccer '90* you select your team's nationality from the not terribly inspiring choice of Italy, Spain, Belguim and, surprise, surprise, England. (Clearly Virgin aren't intending to do great business in Glasgow or Dublin.) Whichever team you choose, it's your skill that's going to be relied upon to get them to the final so picking Italy is no greater guarantee of success than picking lowly old England. Having selected your team, you have to get through the preliminary rounds against the likes of Japan and the USA.

Once you've managed to get past this little lot, it's time to take on the big boys. Just when you thought you'd mastered the game, you find your defence left standing by pin-point passes from the West German forwards.

Apparently the programmers wanted Hungary to be the team you confronted in the final. The Virgin bods were less keen, especially when it looked as if the Hungarian team had about as much chance of being in Italy in June as Charlton Athletic has of staying in the first division. Realism held the day and it's Brazil that you'll be facing on the big day.

As well as attempting to battle your way through to the final itself, there's also a high score table which records wins, losses and ties. Any victory by more than two goals gets you extra points so it's a good idea to give the USA a sound thrashing (and then beat their soccer team).

Enough about the competition, what about the matches themselves? These are viewed from a a sort of sideways-and-a-bit-above viewpoint. Player control is fairly standard, by pressing the fire button you take control of the player nearest the ball. The fire button also controls shooting and tackling. However once the ball gets into the penalty area the game gets all distinctive looking. If you are defending then the screen is filled with a behind-the-goal view showing your keeper and the guy with the ball. The goalkeeper is then under your control. Equally when you are attacking, your view suddenly changes to a close-up of the opposition goal.

The programmers have obviously been influenced by the injury record of Bryan Robson et al. Infrequent fouls send players crashing to the ground with stars spinning round their heads. If a player gets a real Nobby Stiles then stretcher bearers come rushing onto the pitch to carry him off. Such brutal tactics are likely to draw a red card from the ref whose head and shoulders take up a corner of the screen. He also blows his whistle and shouts out various instructions such as "Free Kick", "Throw In", "Scrap The Poll Tax" etc.

The ref is a busy man 'cos *World Cup Soccer '90* is fast, furious and, when Lakin's on the ball, very dirty.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	World Cup Soccer '90
PUBLISHER	Virgin
PRICE	ST/Amiga £19.99 PC £24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	Out now

THE BIG M



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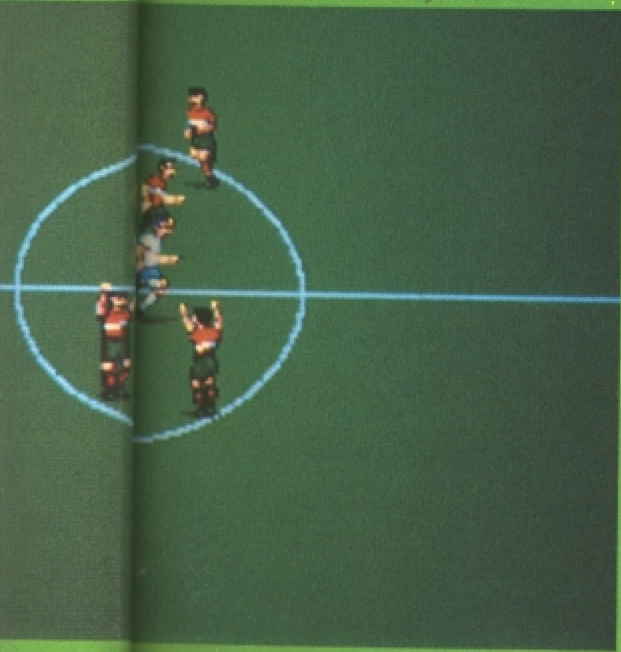
BIG MATCH



Well it's a cup game so anything could happen but on the day both teams will be looking for a result.



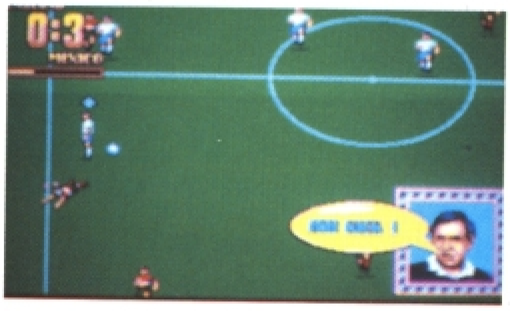
The lad only has to beat the keeper to put England back in the match so why is he aiming straight at him?



What? 6-0? Well, I suppose there's always 1994 – I never liked football much anyway.

Paul: Hmm well I think we used up all the good football quotes in the last issue. (Perhaps good isn't the word I'm looking for.) So let's see if I can get to the end of this without saying "Over the moon" or "The lad done well".

World Cup Soccer '90 is one of this year's best additions to what is becoming a very crowded market. In appearance it's not a million miles removed from two of the other really rather good games that have kicked off this year, namely *Man Utd* and *Emlyn Hughes Soccer.* As



If we can't beat them we can at least kick 'em to death.

well as the nicely animated players, there are also some neat graphic touches such as the cameramen, policemen and dogs standing by the touchline. The animated referee's head is a good touch and actually sounds like a ref rather than a speak your weight machine. In view of this, it's surprising that the sound of the crowd is so weak, bearing an alarming similarity to a cat stuck up a tree. What makes more noise than a cat stuck up a tree? Two *World Cup Soccer '90s* stuck up a tree, that's what.

Like most good footie games the gameplay takes a bit of getting used to. My first game ended in a humiliating 10-nil thrashing at the hands of the Yanks. However, once I'd come to grips with the controls I was a happier and more successful player. There is loads of potential for skillful dribbling and well timed tackles. *(Which probably explains why you lost 10-nil. Ed.)* Tackling is tricky but realistic. Instead of being obliged to launch yourself into a sliding tackle to get the ball, it's more a matter of sticking your leg out at the right moment and really hassling the man on the ball. Opposing players don't give the ball up easily though and it can be quite a tussle so you might prefer to adopt Wimbledon tactics and just kick your opponent's legs out from under him.

With all the footie games around this year, good gameplay is just not enough – novelties are the order of the day if a game is to get noticed. *World Cup Soccer '90* has its fair share of novelties some of which, like the stretcher bearers, are fun but a bit gimmicky. However, the goal sequence is fun and very effective. The sudden change in perspective can be a bit confusing but once the change is complete it adds a new dimension to the game. It works best if you are in goal. The keeper is agile and the whole sequence is really smoothly animated. If you're doing the shooting then things are a bit more tricky and I found it a lot easier to score if I shot from outside the area before the sequence had started.

HASSLE FACTOR:1
Takes quite a while to load.

In the two player option the change of perspective is slightly less satisfying. Since in *World Cup Soccer '90* football is a game of one half, there is no changing ends, so one player always views his own keeper head on and has to shoot while watching from behind the goal.

Real football enthusiasts looking for a realistic World Cup simulation might be a little disappointed by the format of the competition which is more like a knock-out than the mini-leagues of the real thing. As with the lack of half-times and the less than useful high score table, this is presumably a hang over from the game's arcade days. However, though it may not be the most realistic simulation of the actual competition, most gripes are likely to be swiftly forgotten once the players have run out onto the pitch. If you only buy one footie game this year then you'll not be far wrong if you buy *World Cup Soccer '90.*



Alan Rough demonstrates a chapter from *The Guide To Scottish Goalkeeping.*

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	89
S	SOUND	75
A	ADDICTIVENESS	89
E	EXECUTION	92

• 20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

A more natural winner than the England squad will ever be.

88

STOP

review

AND MIGHT MAGIC II

By the orb of King Kalohn The Vanquished and the jacuzzi complex of the fabled Water Lords, I conjure thee to take a peek at *Might And Magic II*. May your loins be fruitful and your goblin chopper well bloodied...

Ye Gods! It's the tenth century and chaos reigns in the land of Cron. West Berkhampstead has been engulfed by the Quagmire of Doom and dragons have taken over New Scotland Yard. Law and order has given way to sword and sorcery – which is pretty good news since you're more at home bludgeoning witches to death than handing out parking tickets.

***Might And Magic II* is an open-ended adventure game in which you can wander almost anywhere and do almost anything. There are no set goals and no preset characters that you have to use. In fact, it's all rather confusing at first as you plough about beating up poor defenceless goblins and getting, erm... nowhere really.**

To begin with, you can create up to 24 characters, any six of which may be drawn together to form an adventuring party. In other words, you can have four separate bands trogging about poking their nose into everybody else's business. The usual range of *Dungeons And Dragons* style options are available: race, character, class, sex and alignment. There are two 9 level spell books containing 96 spells and a whole host of weapons and magic items to mess about with. A word of warning: 10 foot pikes are not suitable for children and gnomes.



Your finest ale Sir.

Five towns are available for exploration, each with an inn where different parties can meet up and hire thugs. Travel between the towns is by means of teleportation. Enter the portal, pay your money and whammo! New country, new bars to get arrested in. It's a bit like travelling on French motorways but without granny getting carsick.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Might And Magic II
PUBLISHER	New World Computing/U.S. Gold
PRICE	T.B.A.
FORMAT	Amiga/PC
RELEASED	Easter



This charming green brain-eater wants to nibble Lakin's noddle off. Unfortunately he's got no brain...

AMIGA

Spig Of The Whastes Of Elfin Buttocks Jnr: My dad's still great with child and somebody has stolen my best marble. *(Get on with it. Ed.)* Erm, yes, right. I'm in two minds about *M&M II*. The actual game system (combat calculation, spells etc.) is sophisticated but user friendly. Limitations of what you can carry, wear and use make sense (except that the same suit of armour can be worn by a three foot gnome or a seven foot half-orc) and the keyboard driven options make actions speedy and convenient.

Unfortunately, the game is hampered by daft use of graphics. For example, walk into a pub and a barmaid will appear and ask if she can help. Say no and she disappears. Has she exploded or what?! This is the case with all encounters and though it doesn't interfere with gameplay, it seems a bit silly. And the locations all look the same until you hit a subquest

Another feature of the game is dead annoying – you can only save a game at one of the five inns. What tends to happen is you troll about killing monsters, gaining experience and then die before you make it back home. So it's back to square one. It doesn't help that you have no idea how powerful monsters are until it's too late. A mean looking group of demons turn out to be a cinch, but a band of poofy wood elves pack bows like bazookas.

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
Two disks, no juggling.

Might And Magic II is perhaps a bit heavy on the combat side and light on brain teasers. It'll appeal to adventurers who are more interested in mapping and disembowelling than using their grey matter. If you're into graphic style adventuring, then it'll prove a big disappointment. But RPG players who enjoy a well-constructed game system and enjoy mutilating mythical beasts will love it. Yep, you pays your money and takes your choice.

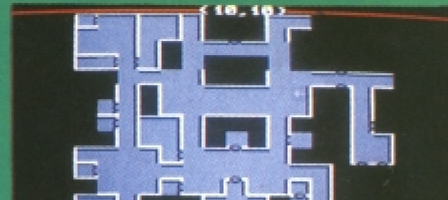
Can I have my marble back now?

GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS	SOUND	EXECUTION	OVERALL
65	75	57	71	72



This nice white-bearded elderly gentleman wants to sell me a disembowelling hook.

HACK 'N' MAP



Since there are no friendly bobbies to ask for directions, just packs of giant rabid rats etc., making a map is pretty essential unless you're a complete plonker. Fortunately, if one of your characters has Cartography skills (and presumably a damn good memory), you can turn on the auto-mapping function. This is Middlegate, a sleepy town disturbed only by the barking of dogs and the bone-crunching of roving gangs of mutant zombies.

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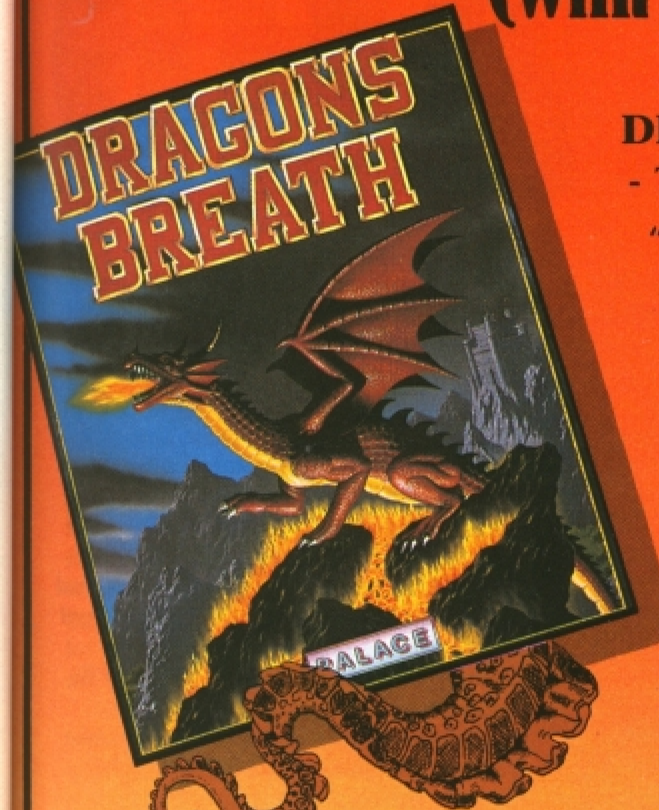
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A TALE OF DRAGONS, CRUGHONS AND SPRITE CONSTRUCTION

(with very good reviews)



DRAGONS BREATH - THE FANTASY STRATEGY GAME OF 1990

"You feel that you are creating magic" **89% THE ONE**

"Graphics are excellent, and the stereo sound effects are superb... go for it." **89% C&VG (C & VG HIT)**

"Pretty tasty.. great feel and depth." **92% CU (Screenstar)**

PALACE

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OUTLAW



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"Brilliant." **90% ZERO**

"Set to become a timeless classic" **90% THE ONE**

ST/AMIGA R.R.P. £24.99

DELPHINE SOFTWARE CINEMATIQUE

PALACE SOFTWARE - ART FOR GAMES' SAKE

PALACE

LHX ATTACK

Shoot! I was still in Saigon or was it East Germany er.. or perhaps Libya! Erm... Anyway... they say in *LHX Attack Chopper* that if you want something bad enough, you can always get it. I wanted a mission... *David Wilson* 'played' *The Ride Of The Valkyries* on a comb and greaseproof paper and got to grips with Electronic Art's new helicopter combat flight sim.

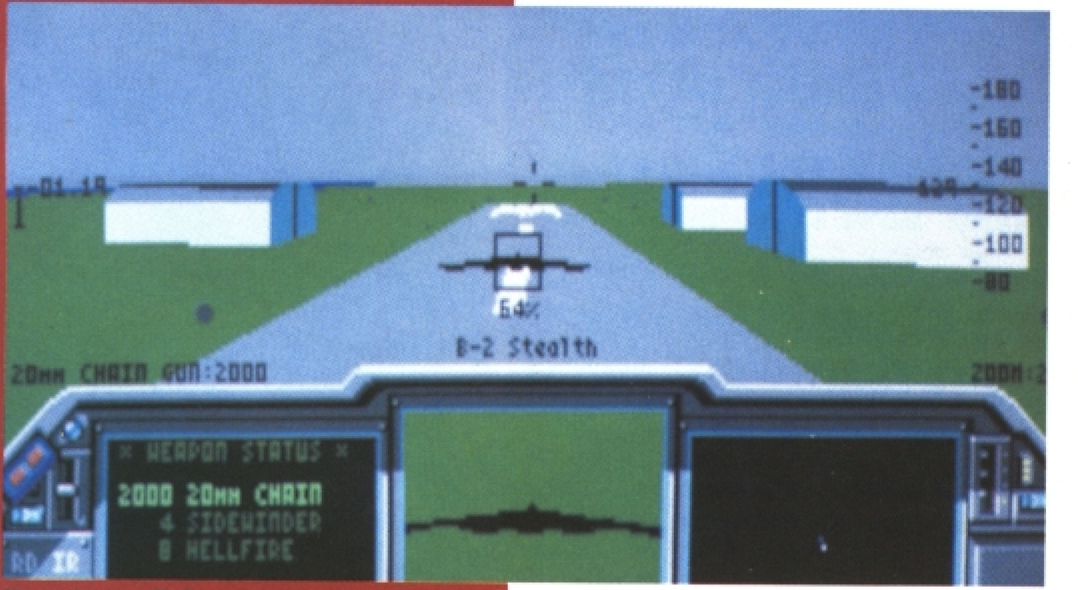
ZERO HERO

It probably hasn't escaped your notice that flight sims are very 'in' at the moment. But if you're sick to death of 'sky jocks', then why not try your hand at a combat helicopter flight? This is where *LHX Attack Chopper* comes in. It's Electronic Art's latest venture into the world of flight sims and it lets you fly loads of different missions in Libya, Vietnam or East Germany.

For these you'll have the choice of four helicopters, two 'slicks' (transports) and two 'guns' (gunships) and an array of hardware.

EA have deliberately opted for a game that combines flight sim and arcade action. The level of simulation has been reduced to make the game instantly accessible. Although *LHX* does come with a 128 page manual, it's actually possible to load the game up and fly. (You won't get very far, but it is possible.) For slightly longer game length, you'll need to become 'au fait' with the 'Electronic Counter Measure' panel. Oh, and it also could be useful to learn how to shoot things!

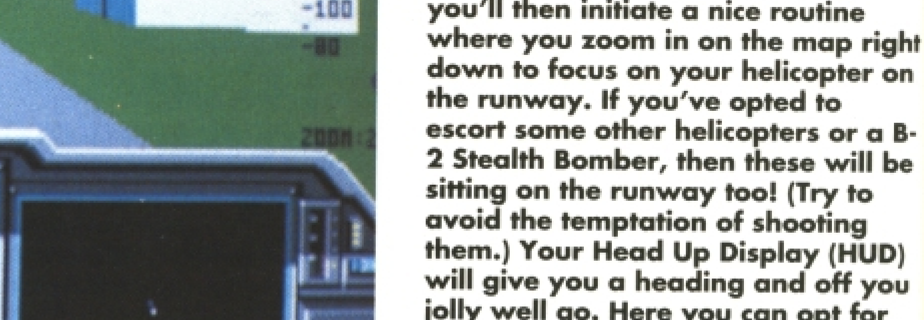
Right, so you've chosen a mission, a helicopter and armed it to your taste. You will then see a map of the terrain showing your objectives. Once you click okay, you'll then initiate a nice routine where you zoom in on the map right down to focus on your helicopter on the runway. If you've opted to escort some other helicopters or a B-2 Stealth Bomber, then these will be sitting on the runway too! (Try to avoid the temptation of shooting them.) Your Head Up Display (HUD) will give you a heading and off you jolly well go. Here you can opt for 'Time Compression' which increases the time scale and helps you 'speed' straight into action. Once you find



Here I am, flying an LHX in East Germany. Like the hi-tech 'instrument panel'? Ooh look, there's a B2. Shall I shoot it?

CHOPPER SHOPPER

Right, I'm almost set but I've still to choose a chopper! It's a tad tricky 'cos some are much better suited to certain missions than others.



1 The APACHE is the latest US Army strike helicopter, development from the HUEY COBRA, the first helicopter 'gunship'.

2 The next generation strike chopper, the eponymous LHX.

3 Your first transport helicopter. It's a SIKORSKY S-70 BLACK HAWK, the contemporary US army transport.

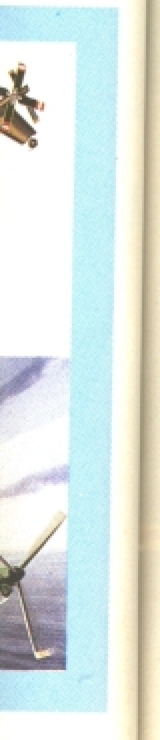
4 Another hop into the future with the BELL/BOEING V-22 OSPREY. This baby's tricky to fly, because it features a tilt rotor feature that allows it to fly as a helicopter or a plane!

K CHOPPER



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enemy targets, the action comes thick and fast (remember to click back to 'normal' time scale again!) You'll get a visual warning if enemies search or track you with their weapons guidance systems. This is your chance to take evasive action and to use your jammers. If this is unsuccessful, then you'll get an audio and visual warning alerting you to an incoming missile and telling you if it's of the Radar or Infra-Red variety. I suggest you now drop a flare or some chaff.

Okay, so then you perform your task, whether it be taking out a ground or air target, dropping or picking up supplies or personnel. If it's the latter and you're flying a strike chopper... erm, then you've made a bit of a hash of it, haven't you!? If you're in a transport, then you've got other skills to master. Supplies can be winched and men can be picked up by hovering below 10 feet. Right, your HUD will now give you the heading for your landing strip so hov'er off and you can be home in time for tea.

The game plays smoothly and quickly, and the detail is pitched at a high level. At low altitude you see ground detail, including those trusty dots which provide the invaluable warning of the proximity of terra firma! In external view, you can see your shadow too! There are trees and buildings, even camels in the Libyan scenarios! Thrill as you pick up personnel and you can see them waving their arms about! When you 'lock on' to a target, you'll get a tracking camera following and magnifying your target. Fire a TOW wire guided missile and you can get a missile eye view and steer it to its target! It's so exciting, I simply can't write any more, I've got to go and play it. Er... let's have a box-off.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	LHX Chopper
PUBLISHER	Electronic Arts
PRICE	£39.99/T b a
FORMAT	PC/ST & Amiga
RELEASED	Out now

RETCH FOR THE SKIES

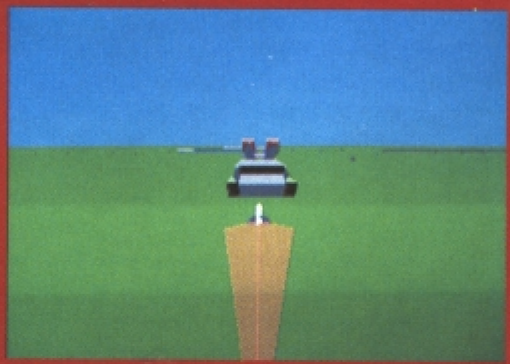
As Telly Savalas recognised "A picture paints a thousand words" so come with us now, as we join 2nd Lieutenant Amy Johnson on a sample mission...



1 Ok, we've got two slicks en route to a dust off deep in enemy territory. Basically we've got to pre-empt their arrival at the LZ and cool Charlie down a bit.



2 Stepping forward in time, we arrive at the landing zone and we've already turned a tank into a black smudge!



3 Amy fires a shot at this missile launcher. You can actually steer the missile to its target!



4 Right, that's cleaned the plane up a bit ... and here come the Black Hawks, just in time!



5 How fortunes change! We're on our way home, being badgered by a "Hind" and Amy's taken a hit!



6 Probably safest if we go into warp speed and go home. Hurrah! We've made it! But how did the slicks get here first?

review LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

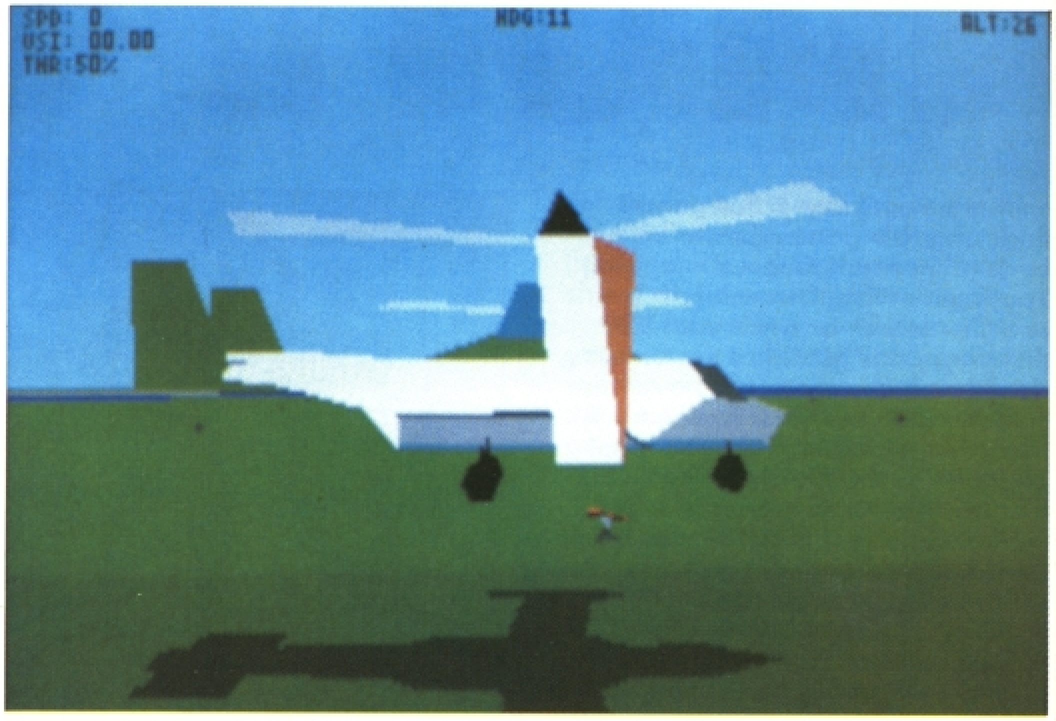
PC

David: Ever since I read the brilliant *Chickenhawk* – a book by Robert Mason detailing his exploits as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam – I've been keen to find a computer game that could do justice to such hair-raising combat flights. Let me tell you, *LHX Attack Chopper* comes close! My main reservation is that the flight sim part of the game is over-simplified. Helicopters are one of the trickiest things in the world to fly *(Ask Mike Smith! Ed.)* In a real chopper, you've got two joysticks to start with – the Cyclic Control Stick and the Collective Pitch Control Lever – and then there's the Directional Control Pedals! I know that EA deliberately chose not to opt for the complexity of, say MicroProse's Gunship, but they may have gone too far the other way. All the helicopter's controls are simulated by the movement of one joystick which admittedly makes the machine easier to fly. There is a further key that lets your helicopter perform feats that would be impossible to a real helicopter! Features like this obviously make the game more accessible, but it would have been nice to have the choice of more sim and less arcade.





This gripe aside, the game is brilliant. There are a wealth of missions and scenarios, four different helicopters to pilot (each with different characteristics and control panel layout), different weapons and loads of variables to adjust the difficulty level etcetera. One clever option allows you to opt for less cockpit detail, thus freeing valuable memory to allow the game speed to increase! The vector graphics don't disappoint and the multiple external views, including from an enemy target looking at you(!) are a treat! Mountains have a tendency to suddenly loom quite large but appear far enough to allow you to take the appropriate course.



This is the Osprey in external viewing mode. Oh, it's also the hardest to fly. Look, there's a man over there with some large and expensive photographic equipment! *(Actually, it's an anti-helicopter weapon. Ed.)*

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
Disk Hassle? Two disks, no hassle.

There are a lot of elements in this game that contribute to the atmosphere. One of the overiding fears in *Chickenhawk* was the pilot's feeling of vulnerability as he sat in his plexi-glass cockpit. This is a cause for concern in *LHX* too. You can take hits that destroy instruments, 'hardpoints' (weapon mounts), your rotors(!) or – the case in point – you!! If you want to live to receive a Purple Heart, then you'd better hop it to the nearest airfield pronto!

And that's it really. My main complaint was that I would have preferred more of a sim element. There is also the extremely dodgy (not to mention historically inaccurate) political aspect where the US Army are cast as the heroes of South East Asia etcetera. Anyway, it's a very accessible game that'll get you airborne in no time. Little challenge to fly but big challenge to outsmart the numerous enemies! Read the book and buy the game. STOP

On one Libyan mission you get to fly Johnny Morris on a photo shoot with a camel. On the right is our quarry and on the left, the 'real thing'!
***Normal Johnny Morris voice:* "Hello Mr Camel,"**
Deep Johnny Morris voice:* "Oooh, loook. It's a Sikorsky 5-70/UH-60A Black Hawk. You don't see many of those around..." *(Are you sure about this? Ed.)



THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	88
S	SOUND	88
A	ADDICTIVENESS	95
E	EXECUTION	91

• 20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

A huge helicopter combat sim that puts you in the hot seat of four modern/future choppers. Atmospheric but a tad skimpy on the sim side.

90

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review

TANK



Here's an M1. Blimey! Look at all those big holes in its side.

ZERO HERO

Tank games are like buses: there aren't any around for ages and then suddenly loads turn up at once. Well, now the number 73 has arrived – in the form of *Tank*, the M1 Abrams simulation from Spectrum Holobyte. *Duncan MacDonald* sneakily flashes an out-of-date travel card at the conductor and boards this new 'tank bus' to check out the details.

The tank simulation is a peculiar beast. It's sort of a strategy game, but it's the kind of strategy game that people who don't particularly like strategy games can enjoy – because you can 'get your hands dirty'. Map-reading and planning of tactics is fused with real in-tank action. Basically a tank simulation is a thinking man's shoot 'em up – and this offering from Spectrum Holobyte is no exception to the rule. But at the end of the day the map is the all-important part of the game, so where better to start? Here's a map from an atlas to get you in the mood.



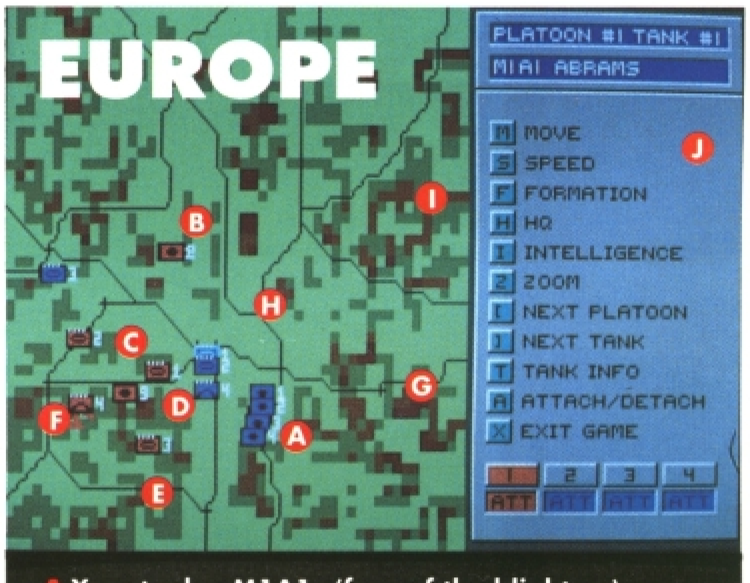
This is the island of Yell. It's part of the Shetlands and lies further north than Oslo. Formed during volcanic activity in 1345, Yell is now popular with ornithologists because puffins nest there. Apart from that it's totally useless.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	**Tank**
PUBLISHER	**Mirrorsoft**
PRICE	**ST/Amiga T.B.A. PC £34.99**
FORMAT	**ST/Amiga/PC**
RELEASED	**ST/Amiga: T.B.A. PC: May**

Right, now time for the *Tank* map. There are three, actually: Fort Knox (the training ground), Central Europe and The Middle East. Let's toss a coin: heads and we'll show you Fort Knox, tails Europe and if the coin lands on its edge you'll get The Middle East. Flick. Right, Europe it is.

Here's the first mission in the Central Europe scenario (there are five missions to each scenario). Basically, you have to destroy all advancing enemy tanks before they destroy the fuel dump. You can put all your tanks on auto-pilot or leave three on auto and take control of the remaining one. The thing to do first though is to check out (and use) the options from the main menu (choosing a particular option will bring up a list of sub-options – it's all very logical and quite easy to get to grips with). MOVE gives you the chance to program your tanks' route. (The sub-menu allows you to give each tank up to five pre-set destinations – although in this case staying put might be a good idea.) SPEED allows you to programme each tank's, erm, speed. FORMATION is also self-explanatory, but it's worth knowing that there are eight tank-formations to choose from. The HQ option is quite a biggie, giving you loads and loads of sub-menus. Basically though, you can call on help from your artillery or attack aircraft (you show them on the map where you want to shell or bomb). Or you can send reconnaissance aircraft over the terrain to check out the enemy positions (they'll be updated on the map). INTELLIGENCE gives you all sorts of information while ZOOM does what it says – from satellite height all the way down to detailed views of all the vehicles and ground detail.



A Your tanks, M1A1s (four of the blighters). B,C,D & E The enemy tanks, mostly T-72s. Four groups, each containing three tanks. Guess where they're heading? For you, that's where. F A fuel dump. You don't want it to be blown up. They don't care. G A hill. H A road. I Another hill. J The main menu.

NEXT PLATOON and NEXT TANK switch you, on-map, between the different tanks and platoons (although there's only one platoon in this particular mission). TANK INFO gives you exactly what you'd expect (i.e. information on a highlighted vehicle) while DETATCH/ATTATCH allows you to send single tanks off on lone missions. In a mission with four allied platoons you can detatch them all, meaning there are 16 tanks all going their own way and doing their own 'thang'. EXIT GAME puts you in the position of being able to load in *Tetris* (or something).

An entire game can, in theory, be carried out purely on the map – but that would be silly given the quality and diversity of the in-tank graphics (EGA only, but very good nonetheless). Lack of space forbids in-depth explanation of all the views possible, so let's just say that every single one you could want has been catered for – there's even a drone camera that you can send anywhere on the battlefield: you can rotate it and everything... it's like having Kate Adie and a camera team on call. All the tank controls are there for you to use (as long as you remember to take the bally thing



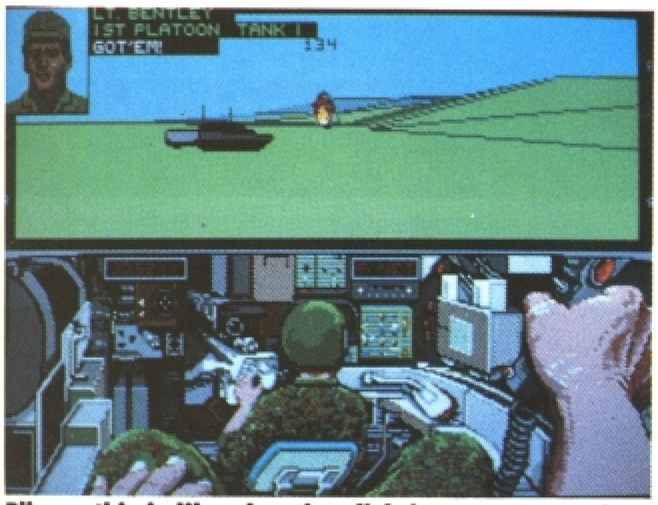
off autopilot, that is). The Gunner Screen lets you play about with laser sighting, binocular mode, shell loading, choice of shell and a host of other things. The Driver's Screen gives dial freaks loads of guages to look at, smoke generating freaks a button to press (which releases smoke blankets) and thermal periscope freaks the chance to switch to night-time vision. Oh, and you 'drive' the tank from here as well (and that includes changing gears as well as just steering). There's the Machine Gun Screen which puts you in charge of a topside mounted 12.77mm job, useful for firing at light armoured vehicles and aircraft. And there's the Cupola Screen (which is the moving observation turret) and also the Turret Topside View where your head sticks out



Yee hah! Lieutenant Jabber has dinged a T-72!

of the top of the tank – you get the best views from here but it can be dangerous.

By jiggling between the different tank views and the map screen all the information you need is at hand. The terrain is undulating and the laws of physics and mechanics prevail – so if quick progress between A and B is your prerogative, try to stick to the roads – (though flat ground can make your tanks sitting ducks). If you want a fight, popping into the hills means you can engage in some 'hull-down' malarkey. Or there's the library of numerous armoured vehicle battle tactics to call upon such as the famous Derrière d'Artignon Rearguard Action, a manoeuvre much favoured by Monty in the deserts of North Africa during World War II.



Blimey, this is like shooting fish in a wossname! *(Yes, but you are on the easiest level. Ed.)*

Dunc: The trouble with this game, for me, is that it's a thinking man's shoot 'em up – and I'm not very good at thinking. I can normally get around the problem in various cunning ways, but when faced with the kind of challenge posed by an in-depth tank simulation I find myself reeling. "Aim your gun over there and shoot everything that moves." Fine, I can handle that. "Drive to the top of that hill and then drive back down again." No problems. "Split your three platoons and guard the



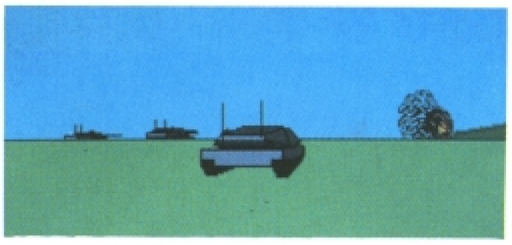
Oh-oh, incoming! Let's scoot over that hill.

bridge from six enemy tanks." Er, er, er. "Four enemy platoons have you surrounded, you're under fire from the artillery and enemy air support is on the way. Engage and destroy." Strewth! Spectrum Holobyte's *Tank* delivers difficulty with a capital D and realism with a capital R. (It's worth mentioning that some of the team responsible for this game also coded and designed *Falcon*.) Because of the amount of strategy in a simulation of this type, the method of inputting orders to the map screens is all-important – and in *Tank* it couldn't have been implemented more logically: it's all very user-friendly, with the main menu leading you into a plethora of sub-menus. No need to keep referring to the manual because you've forgotten which key takes you into Close Air Support mode, it's there on-screen (key C, fact fans).

The battlefields themselves are totally ginormous and strewn with hills. Using the absolutely brilliant ZOOM function, you can highlight the area containing your platoons (or the enemy platoons) and cycle in from satellite height. As you get nearer the ground, tiny dots start appearing. Carry on zooming in and the 'zoom view angle' starts to change – like an aircraft pulling out of a dive. The dots start getting bigger, revealing themselves to be tanks, houses, telegraph poles, bridges or whatever – and you can see the horizon in the distance. Neat stuff. The myriad views from the tanks are pretty smart too, with lots of 'outside shots' to help you orientate yourself. The feeling of going up and down hills is rather spiffy too – especially when driving along a road. There you are with a short uphill stretch in front of you, framed by the sky, and then you reach the crest of the hill – the tank plops down over the top and suddenly the road stretches off into the distance, eventually disappearing from view at the top of the next hill (which really looks as if it's about three miles away). This feeling of being so small in a vast landscape does every-thing for the atmosphere of the game. There's never the nagging awareness that you're 'next to the edge of the map'.

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
No disk faffing, no waits.

The gameplay is, well, as I said, er, rather hard: even on the 'beginner' level (intermediate and advanced are a total nightmare). But who cares. This isn't the sort of game you load up and get to grips with in 10 minutes or the sort you get bored with in about 10 hours. It's the sort of game that teaches you as time progresses. There's a hell of a lot to learn but the manual is as well thought out as the game itself. Hmmm, Spectrum Holobyte's *Tank* pips Microprose' *M1 Tank Platoon* to the post in my opinion. It's better laid out and gives the impression of being much bigger. In fact, I think I'll even stick my neck out to say that what we have here is the *Falcon* of Tank Simulations!



Hurrah! Mission accomplished! Last one back to base is a blimmin' ninny!

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	90
S	SOUND	81
A	ADDICTIVENESS	92
E	EXECUTION	92

• 20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

The most satisfying tank simulation so far. It's *Falcon* on the ground – shame it's only EGA.

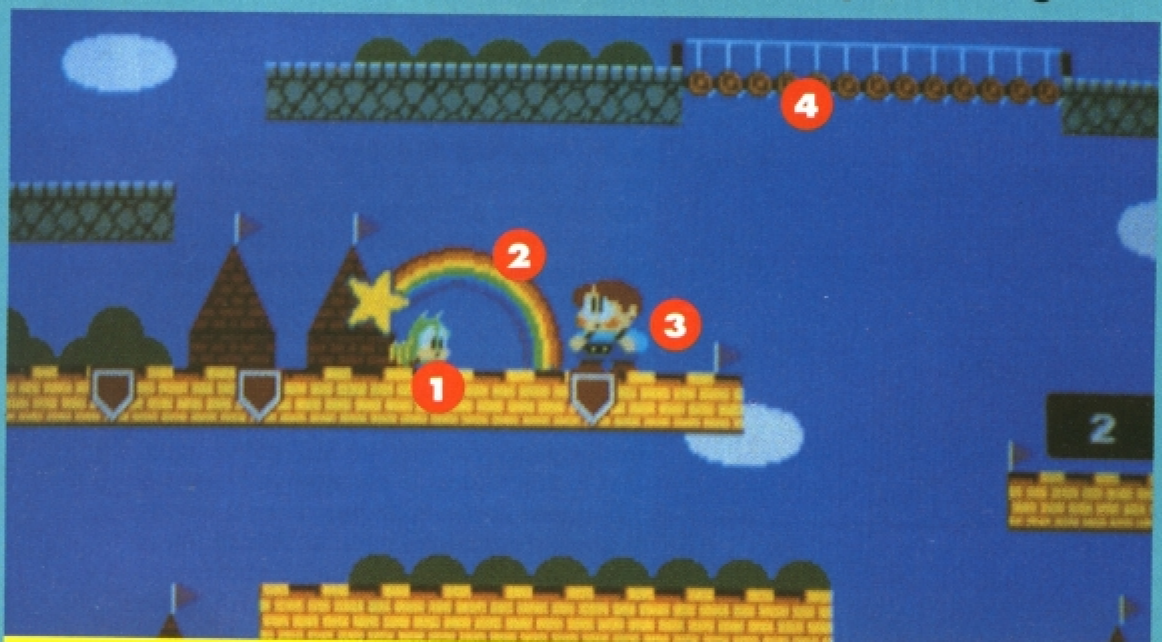
91

STOP

review

RAINBOW ISLANDS

Somewhere over the rainbow you'll find *Richard 'Tin Man' Pelley* and *Paul 'Cowardly Lion' Lakin* taking a break from vandalising the yellow brick road and playing Ocean's new platform game.



1. Here we are on Insect Island where there are lots of, um, insects, such as this caterpillar. Shoot with a rainbow, or burst one over his head to kill the blighter.
2. Rainbows are very useful things for walking over, for collecting goodies and killing nasties. As you can see, the rainbow has all the colours of the, er, rainbow.
3. Erm, You.
4. You can jump pretty high, but perhaps not high enough to get onto some of these platforms – but a quick rainbow should do the trick.

Bub is a young nipper who, rather than watching *Rainbow* on telly, prefers to shoot the things at dirty great spiders and fork lift trucks whilst clambering up the sides of mountains. Hardly appropriate behaviour for someone of his tender age. However, he has good reason to do so because Mr Meany Pants himself, Baron Von Blubber, has whipped Bub's girly off to The Rainbow Islands. All this after Bub (with help from his chum, Bob) went to the trouble of rescuing her in *Bubble Bobble* (the prequel), with hardly even a chance for them to have a snog between games! Tch! This time though, Bob's stayed home, leaving you – as Bub – to handle the action.

There are four vertically scrolling rounds in each of the seven islands which you must conquer, each island having a different theme with different baddies. For example there's Insect Island with, erm, lots of insects, Combat Island with lots of trucks and things, and Arkanoid Island, which bears an uncanny resemblance to a certain game. At the end of each level there's also a mega-nasty to deal with.

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
The only real hassle is trying to tear yourself away from it.

Fortunately, at the touch of a button (fire, actually) you can create lots of rainbows, which are dead handy for walking across, jumping onto, ironing socks and cleaning windows with. Fire one directly at a nasty and a piece of fruit will appear. Trap one underneath a rainbow, or break one above his head and a large bonus appears. Yep, I lurve bonuses and *Rainbow Islands* is riddled with 'em; new ones pop up on every level.

Well, that's the game in theory but how does it play? Read on...

ST

ZERO HERO

Rich: I wouldn't say that *Rainbow Islands* is very good on the ST. Nope. 'Bleedin' ber-illiant' is a slightly better way of putting it. Playability-wise, it's got it all (and more besides). It's simple, controls are user-friendly and once you've started playing, addictiveness is the name of the game.

Graphics are a tad on the jump-out-of-the-window-with-amazement side too. Check out the tremendous detail of the backgrounds, characters and the brillo animation. Sound is also pretty darn good, with a different groovy tune accompanying each level and natty sound effects throughout. *Rainbow Islands* is one of the best games I've played in ages. If anyone's planning to buy a game for their ST, then this is the one to go for. Trust me. I'm a doctor...

GRAPHICS	92	ADDICTIVENESS	93
SOUND	87	EXECUTION	94
OVERALL	93		

AMIGA

Paul: *Rainbow Islands* is very well put together with clear, colourful graphics and reasonably slick gameplay. There's a nice balance between difficulty and possibility with lots of encouraging little bonuses to pick up along the way.

The use of rainbows as weapons is an imaginative, if slightly cutesy, idea particularly as they can be used to trap as well as shoot nasties. It's also possible to walk up them but I found this a tadge unreliable as they often crumbled away faster than granny's stodgiest crumble.

For most of the game the soundtrack is really impressive but at moments of great tension its cheery tinkly tinkly tune is guaranteed to drive you up the wall. While you're there you'll probably meet an end of level nasty and that, quite frankly, will be the end of you.

Rainbow Islands is a tough little cutie and will be loved by platform players.

STOP

GRAPHICS	87	ADDICTIVENESS	87
SOUND	88	EXECUTION	88
OVERALL	87		

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Rainbow Islands
PUBLISHER	Ocean
PRICE	£19.99/£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	Out now

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review

SHERMAN M4



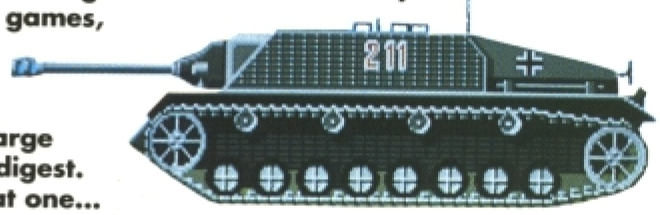
Carefully avoiding jokes such as 'tanks for the memory' and 'I had trouble with the controls because I was tanked up', *Duncan MacDonald* and *David Wilson* have a look at *Sherman M4*, the new tank 'simulation' from Loriciels.



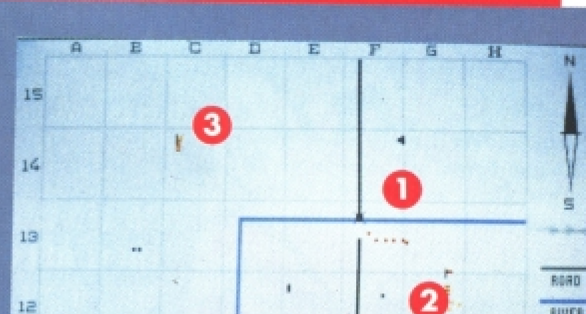
Sherman M4 plunges you back 50 years to the Second World War – a time when tanks still had funny little porcelain handles to pull and dials to let you know when they were running out of coal. In *Sherman M4* you get the chance to take control of four of these little beauties (and a couple of slightly use-free jeeps). There are three campaigns on offer, each of which actually happened in the war: The Normandy Landings, The Battle Of The Ardennes and The North Africa Campaign. Each of these three campaigns is further sub-divided into five battles, which can be fought in any order you desire – unless you fancy yourself as a bit of a pro, in which case you can take them all in succession, with losses from one fight being carried through to the next. As with all tank games, navigation and tactics play an important role so you won't be surprised to hear that there are some rather large on-screen scrolling maps to digest. In fact, let's have a gander at one...



All the vehicles can be remote controlled from the map. You click on the relevant number key (1 for tank one, 2 for tank two, 5 and 6 for the jeeps etc.) and then drag a flashing cursor dot to the required destination – and in this case the bridge is a good starting point. Once you've implemented all this you can click into 'inside tank' mode. Filled vectors ahoy, as you survey your other tanks and note the triangular trees zooming by. You can take over the controls of the vehicle you're in, simply by moving the joystick. A 180° turn to face the bosch and a quick switch to periscope mode to find the nearest Panzer. Pan the horizon. Aha – a little silver blob and it's getting bigger. Back out of periscope mode and raise the gun barrel – because as soon as the enemy tank comes within range it'll be time to fire. Maybe it'd be a good idea to cross the river, blow up the bridge and head off to Calais? Then again maybe it wouldn't. It's this sort of decision-making coupled with the shoot 'em-up element that you have to jiggle between – and so the game can be played in different ways.



The three maps (Normandy, Ardennes and Desert) are each three screens deep and contain a few surprises. Not only do you have the tanks to contend with, but also bunkers, patches of quicksand, minefields, heavy artillery guns and churches. *(Eh? Ed.)* Each time you take an enemy stronghold, you'll spot a flagpole which you have to touch with your tank: the enemy flag will disappear to be replaced by the star spangled banner. The front end of the game is full of options so can make the game as easy or as tricky as you want.

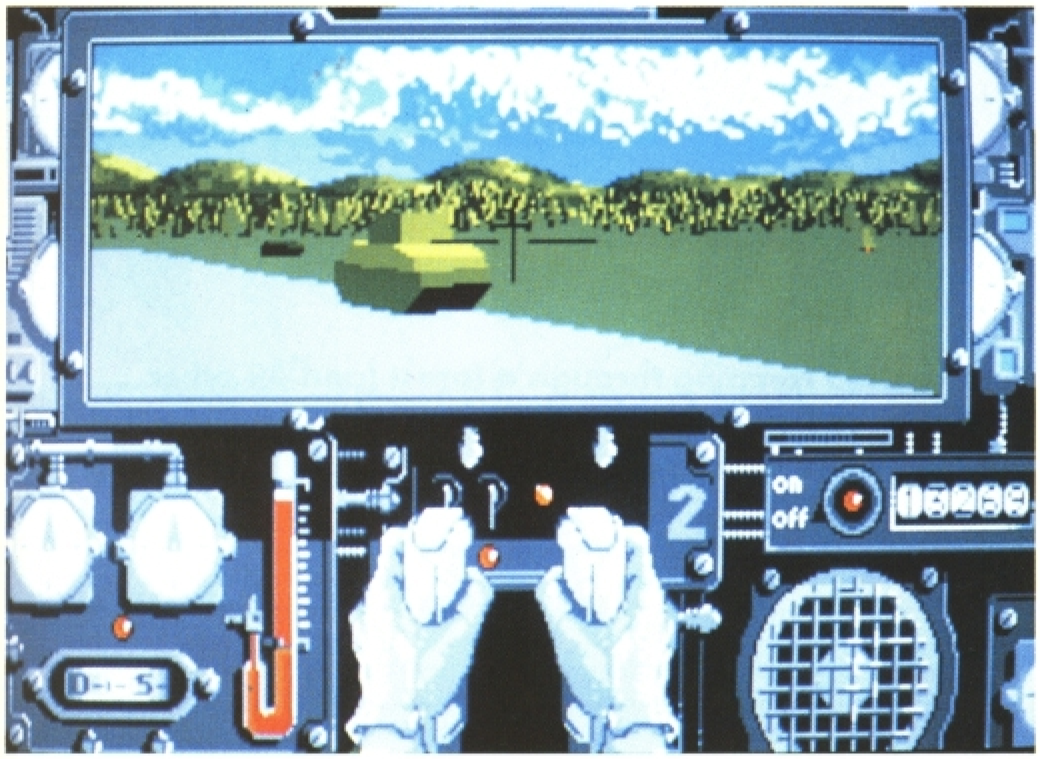


THE FIRST BATTLE IN THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

1. The red dots are your boys: the four Shermans and two rather useless jeeps (with absolutely zero firepower and square wheels).
2. Oh dear, some orange dots. Never have orange dots been so alarming. (They're the German tanks, you see, and they're heading right for you.)
3. Basically you've been ordered to leg it, and this is where you have to leg it to. You can refuel here, and get patched up. (And have a picnic if the weather's nice).
4. If you haven't just crawled out of bed after a 36 hour drinking binge, you may have realised that this blue line is a river – and as your Shermans aren't of the underwater variety, you may have twigged that a bridge of some description might be needed. But where is it?
5. Oh. There it is. A bridge.
6. A road.
7. Some houses and things.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Sherman
PUBLISHER	Loriciels/US Gold
PRICE	PC/Amiga £24.99 ST £19.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	Out Now



There's two of my chums. The front one is dead, er and the second one isn't.

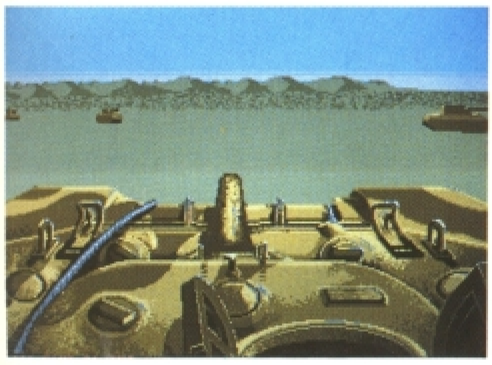
Dunc: Having struggled my way through Microprose's *M1 Tank Platoon* a few issues ago, I was rather pleased that the manual for this Loriciels tank sim wasn't particularly massive. So *Sherman M4* isn't as complicated as eight Wankel rotary engines then? Indeed not, and *Loriciels* readily admits that it isn't intended to be a 'definitive' simulation as such – but a cross between a shoot 'em-up and a simulation. And guess what? They're right!

Now the first thing I tend to do when writing a review is to think to myself "ah yes, but what would I have done if I'd written the game?" Well, in this game I'm afraid the first target is the tank cannons. As WWII Shermans weren't computer aided, a tank commander would have to elevate the cannon depending on how far away he thought the target was. Faff up the angle and you'd have to take another shot. Not so in *Sherman M4*. As soon as an enemy tank is visible to the naked eye it can be hit by a shell fired at maximum elevation. Pretty easy really, which means your only problem is that you're outnumbered – which isn't a problem when you realise that your tanks (and the two rather useless trucks) can outpace the enemy and run away with ease. In other words, the game is a tad on the easy side. I completed the entire Ardennes Campaign on my fourth attempt – although I'll admit that the Desert Campaign stumped me slightly.

However, having slagged that side of it off, I'll quickly add that the compulsion to have another go is certainly evident from the word go. That means it's addictive with a capital 'A'. Erm, a smallish capital 'A', anyway. The graphics are quite nice, as you'll see from the screenshots (and yes, the drivers hands do move). Everything scrolls quite smoothly and the sound's good too, with continuous engine noises from the tanks and sampled explosions.

At the end of the day, I reckon *Sherman M4* could do with a little bit 'more' put into it. Just fixing the cannon elevation quirk would have made a lot of difference – I don't know about you, but I love trying to suss out angles and stuff while under pressure. *(Weirdo. Ed.)* So as Loriciels says, we have a cross between a shoot 'em-up and a simulation. It almost worked – it's just a tiny little bit off centre.

HASSLE FACTOR: 3
Lots of niggly little waits between the map screen and the tank screens – even Mother Theresa would get impatient. A small amount of disk swapping too.



THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	84
S	SOUND	85
A	ADDICTIVENESS	82
E	EXECUTION	80

It's a tank simulation except it's got the feel of a shoot 'em-up. A good stepping stone into the world of the serious and in-depth tank sim.

82

David: Not a lot of people know this but the Sherman M4, the Allied main battle tank of the Second World War, was a bit crap. Compared to its German opponents, it was light-skinned and an easy target. Still, looking on the bright side (unless you were a tank crew member) they were easy to maintain and build. Hurrah! Furthermore, it saw action in all the major campaigns of the war and so it's a pretty good tank to base a game around.

Anyway, I really enjoyed *Sherman M4*. Okay, so it's not a sim to be compared with *M1 Tank Platoon* or *Tank*, but it's instantly accessible and highly playable. The graphics are crisp and smooth and you're able to see everything that's happening. The tanks look like their real life counterparts, but mastering the gun elevation is tricky. Yep, although Dunc was disappointed by this aspect, I frequently had problems. Maybe the PC version demands more accuracy. The temptation is to let the computer control



GAD! That was close. Still those jeeps aren't much cop anyway.

a tank up to the point where it takes aim, then opt for manual control and press the fire button. Still, there are many parameters to adjust the game's difficulty, a nice variety of scenarios and locations and good sound. If you don't have time to master a manual the size of the Old Testament and you fancy some frenetic tank action, then you could do much worse than *Sherman M4*. STOP

HASSLE FACTOR: 1
Two disks, but new loads boot 'em quickly on the trusty PC.

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	85
S	SOUND	80
A	ADDICTIVENESS	84
E	EXECUTION	80

A rather nifty tank game mixing arcade action and simulation but with the emphasis on the former. Accessible and fun.

80





FRED



Ever fancied romping through a forest (and 49 other locations) populated by hordes of weird garden gnomes? No, nor did *David Wilson.* But we ordered him a pint of whatever UbiSoft are 'on' and sent him into their new game *Fred.*



Eau no! It's yet another crazee French game! We always get a bit excited when foreign software arrives in the ZERO office, because these games usually reflect different cultures and humour and subsequently, you end up with a product that is refreshingly different. Where games from our French chums are concerned, this usually interprets itself into a game that's very Weird (with a capital 'W')! Even a tried and tested formula can be given a bizarre Gallic twist. *Fred* from UbiSoft is a case in point. It has a familiar scenario involving a handsome prince in love with a princess, but *Fred* still manages to rate a near maximum score on the ZERO Weird-ometer. You get to play the hero, er... Fred, in his quest to break the evil spell cast upon him by the wicked troll Ultimor. You see Ultimor was envious of Fred's good looks, and his success with the ladies, so in a pique of jealousy he turned Fred into a horrid little wimpy, stumpy sort of fellow. This is you (hem, hem), and your mission is to fight your way through 50 locations to find Ultimor and 'sort him out' thus removing the spell. Are you weedy enough to take the challenge?



WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Fred
PUBLISHER	UbiSoft
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	Out now

David: *Fred* is a graphical treat. It's an arcade adventure with a generous dollop of humour. When your character gets hit he makes a funny noise and stars appear around his head. There are a host of horrid creatures for you to encounter, including bats, skeleton warriors, ghouls, headless zombie gnomes(!), warthogs and wizards. There's one tiny gnome who pokes his tongue out and pulls faces at you. Ignore him and he'll fire a catapult at you! Apparently he will show you the way if you follow him, but I didn't trust the blighter! There are extra-throwing daggers to be collected as well as keys to access the next level or a locked door, and bottles of potion to give you extra energy, immortality or teleport you to next level. Oh and there are also apples which give you more energy. Your energy level is represented at the bottom of the screen in the form of three apples. As you get hurt, bites will appear out of these apples, and when you've got three cores you'd better get ready to meet your maker!

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
Two disks, one for the animated intro, one for the game i.e. no trubs.

The joystick lets Fred perform eight movements including backward jumps and forward rolls. This variety of movements make it easy to perform the wrong move at a crucial time. Add this to the game's peculiar perspective and you'll find the only flaw in this colourful arcade adventure. You see, the game is a viewed-from-the-side vertical scroller, but there are several planes going into the screen. In the castle, for example, you can walk in front of a staircase, behind a staircase or up the stairs. You have to be fairly precise in placing your sprite and mistakes can cause you to walk into trees, columns etc. which will deplete your energy and can kill you at that vital moment.

Still get used to this, and *Fred* is a brilliant game. It features excellent sound effects (such as the demonic laughter from the satanic floating head) and really nice graphics (check out the skeleton warriors rising from the pile of bones). A huge depth of gameplay and the interaction with graphical features such as jumping onto tables etc. certainly make this an arcade adventure well worth checking out.







THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	96
S	SOUND	96
A	ADDICTIVENESS	92
E	EXECUTION	88

• 20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

A brilliant colourful arcade adventure that's got a very frustrating control system(!)

89

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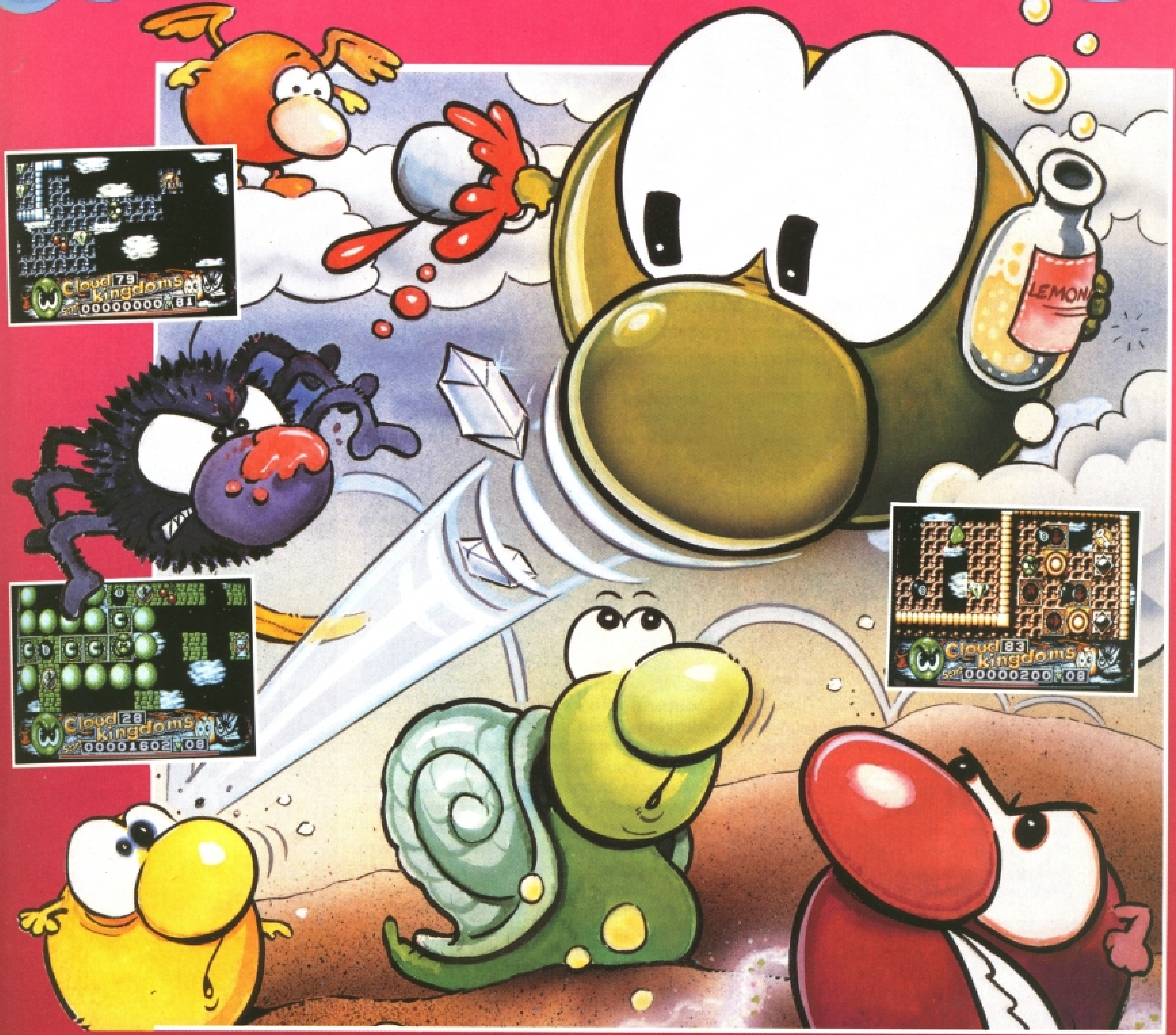
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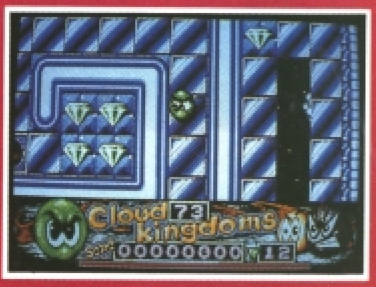
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CLOUD KINGDOMS



THE GAME WITH WITH THE FIRST INJECTION-MOULDED, EIGHT-WAY ROLLING, RUBBER-BOTTOMED SOFTWARE HERO!

When Terry's magic crystals are stolen by Baron von Bonsai and taken to the land of Cloud Kingdoms there's only one thing to do! He climbs into his super-giant green skycopter and sets off to rescue them. There Terry searches each kingdom collecting the crystals as he goes - but things aren't that easy.. along the way he encounters the Giant Rolling Eightballs and the Bad Insect Monsters...



Cloud Kingdoms is addictive arcade action all the way! Each of the 32 levels are totally different - explore them all and delight at the stunning graphics, sound effects and compulsive joystick twitching gameplay. This is one game you just wont' be able to switch off!!

- ★ WITH PINBALL BUMPERS, ICE, MAGNETS, BLACK HOLES, TRAPDOORS, ACID POOLS, LOCKED DOORS... TOO MANY TO LIST!
- ★ COLLECTABLES ON EACH SCREEN - PICK UP DIAMONDS, FRUIT, FLOWERS, KEYS, TREASURE CHESTS ...
- ★ EXTRA PICK-UPS - WINGS, PAINT POTS, CLOCKS, BOUNCING SHOES, RUNNING SHOES, FIZZY POP AND POTION.
- ★ ST VERSION FEATURES AMIGA-QUALITY SOUND.
- ★ BY DENE CARTER - THE CREATOR OF HIT TITLES SUCH AS 'DRUID' AND 'ENLIGHTENMENT'.

AVAILABLE END APRIL 90

ST	£24.99
AMIGA	£24.99
CBM 64 TAPE	£ 9.99
DISK	£14.99
IBM PC (CGA/EGA/VGA)	£24.99

MILLENNIUM

Light Years Ahead

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review

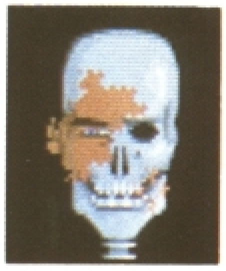
BSS JANE SEYMOUR

Here's a little secret: *Paul Lakin* is rather fond of flouncing through gardens in flowery frocks. That's why we had no problem in getting him to review *BSS Jane Seymour*.



If this is the text book perhaps I'll give the Biology Field Trip a miss this year.

The state of public transport these days is enough to drive a monk to drink. However it's perhaps some compensation to know that things are a lot worse in space. The problems aboard the *BSS Jane Seymour* are enough to make British Rail appear to be a smooth running professional outfit. The shipboard computer has thrown a fit, radiation is dripping from every place that drips and mutants stalk the corridors. The future is not so much bleak as completely washed out.



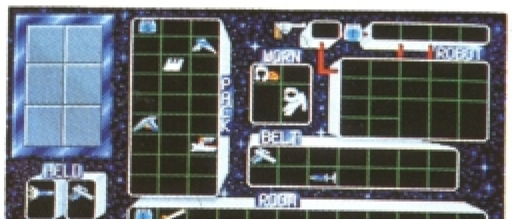
Having landed on this stricken vessel your aim is to repair the shipboard computer by pouring a large amount of coolant into it. This is a bit like summarising the plot of *Hamlet* as being about some geezer trying to kill his uncle. Before (or if) you succeed you'll have dabbled in robot programming, glass blowing and computer maintenance. That's not to mention having to fight more monsters than appear in a single episode of *Baywatch*.

The game contains in the region of 208 locations and you'll have to visit a fair few of them in your search for door passes, supplies, weapons and the other essentials of intergalactic life. There are in the region of 24 or 25 types of room ranging from the fairly useless like reception rooms (seemingly decorated by a 21st century version of Habitat) to the frankly essential, like recharge rooms where you can carry out a few emergency repairs on yourself and also increase the security rating of your door passes. That's handy Harry.

While you're doing all this the computer is continuing to run down and various systems are starting to fail. The same can be said for you as there are injuries and (or) radiation waiting round every corner. Scattered round the ship there are dangerous items, helpful items and frankly confusing items including a Red Herring. (I kid you not.) Very fishy.

To help you there are robots, to hinder you there are mutant crew members but when it comes down to it you're on your own. Just you and a Red Herring against the world.

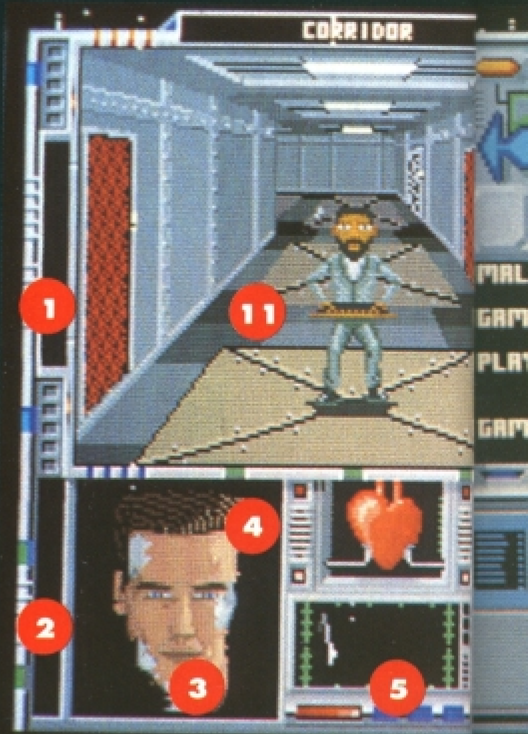
Once you've got all 14 computer systems up and running at full power and completed a tricky sub-mission, it's time to make a break for the Navigation Level and a quick pat on the back. One level down, 19 or so to go. Time to eat the Red Herring.



Hmm hope all this luggage doesn't stop me running away.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	BSS Jane Seymour
PUBLISHER	Gremlin
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	May



★ SCORING

1 Rather important this one. It shows how long your gun or blaster takes to reload. Too long is usually the answer.

2 This shows radiation levels and I can't think of a joke about it.

3 The guide to good health is complexion. Too many laser blasts (to say nothing of late nights) will soon show as your skin peels and you revel in that skeletal look.

4 A healthy heart means a healthy body so keep an eye on this. Too much radiation and your heart may start going yellow or green. It will also beat harder during action sequences, slowing up your recovery rate something chronic.

5 If you've managed to pick up a geiger counter (and bad luck if you haven't) this will show the

JANE SEYMOUR'S GUIDE TO A HEALTHY SHIP

I'm often asked "Jane what should I do if I find myself on a crippled spaceship, riddled with radiation and crawling with mutated nasties? Will all those extra additives damage my complexion?" The answer is no if you follow a sensible program and wear the right sort of perfume. So slip on your leotard and join me in Galactic Beauty, the Jane Seymour way.
Step 1: Here is a helpful little graph showing priority treatment areas.





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radiation level of any object in the vicinity.

6 Movement icons allowing you to go left, right, backwards, forwards and occasionally up or down. This assumes there is no wall or wrangler in your way. Danger is like a brick wall, you can only walk into it not through it.

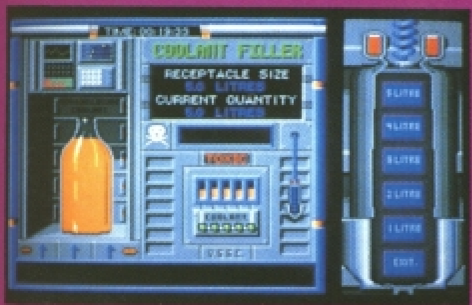
7 You need hands to hold a little baby, here's where you tell what you're hands are holding.

8 What's happening? Read here and find out.

9 Command icons for objects, rooms etc.

10 Command icons for robots – if you've got any.

11 Trouble.



Things look pretty serious – at least there's a rather pleasant aroma.
Step 2: I do feel that when carrying a liquid such as say... er perfume, the bottle is as important as what's in it. I always get my bottles specially made. Isn't science wonderful?
Step 3: A good coolant is as important for a damaged ship's computer as a dab of Max Factor is for chronic B.O.
Step 4: Once you've got enough coolant, and remember you can't skimp with fashion or shipboard repairs, go into action. Pour it all in, stand back and await results. Much like using perfume really.

Paul: Show me an icon-controlled adventure game and I'll show you a mess of complicated clicking. Well that's what I would have said before coming across *BSS Jane Seymour*. Here is a game that is big and manageable. (Ooer.)

This manageability is particularly impressive in view of the range of options open to you during the game. Whether you're programming a robot, consulting the computer damage chart or trying to repair the lighting system, everything is clear and straightforward.



Someone's facing extinction, the question is who?

Quite a nice touch is the way that time continues even when you're using the other 'utility' screens. There you are happily deciding whether to put your torch in your pack or on your belt when a groan and screen judder remind you that you still haven't finished off the Grumblat that's got hold of your ankle.

Combat is often a problem in this sort of game. Many's the time I've lost a few crucial limbs before having clicked on all the icons necessary to start fighting back. *BSS Jane Seymour* takes into account that wimps such as my good self are unlikely to even venture as far as the lavatory without at least one laser in hand. Whenever you're carrying a weapon a sight appears on screen. (The size of the sight depends on the power of the weapon.) This saves a lot of unnecessary suffering on your part.

Although straightforward to play *BSS Jane Seymour* is not easy or safe by any means. Preserving your health is no easier than preserving your looks. In this game it amounts to the same thing. Your health level is displayed by the picture of your face which gradually becomes more skeletal as you get weaker. After this you'll never go on a diet again.

There is an impressive amount of other information available but getting hold of it is a wee bit tricky. Information can only be retrieved from certain rooms or certain robots. When you're hopelessly lost, the computer room is the place to go and call up a map.



Unfortunately for the lazy, the map only reveals where you've been, not where you're going.

Graphically the game is good rather than outstanding and few of the monsters look seriously terrifying. It's also biased against left-handed people 'cos you can only use guns that are in your right hand. There are a fair range of weapons (provided you're right-handed) from feeble little knives to blasters that are just as likely to blow a hole in the ship as in the monster.

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
Only one disk swap and that's optional.

It's good to see a game that manages to be large in scope and simple in playability. Some people say arcade adventures are coming back into fashion, *BSS Jane Seymour* says they never went out.

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	86
S	SOUND	70
A	ADDICTIVENESS	88
E	EXECUTION	91

20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

Well executed, well playable and well worth a look.

89

CYBERNETICS MADE SIMPLE WITH JANE SEYMOUR



I'm often asked "Jane, how can I save a spaceship from self-destuction and still keep that fresh clean *Country Life* look?" The answer is use a robot and let it know who's boss. This is no time for drippy sentimentality, give instructions with the control disks you've picked up on the way round or write a small program. And don't get too attached to the little sweeties as you may want to use one as a walking time bomb.

review

ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE ROBOT MONSTERS

When it comes to two player isometric 3D arcade games called *Escape From The Planet Of The Robot Monsters*, there's no finer critic than *Duncan 'Roger Irrelevant' MacDonald.*



The Prof's nice but I don't fancy her 'chums' much.

Escape From The Planet Of The Robot Monsters (and if you don't mind, we'll call it *EFTPOTRM* from now on) is a simultaneous two player, isometric-viewed, shoot, avoid and collect 'em up. But that explanation doesn't do it justice *(Or make much sense. Ed.)* so let's have a slightly closer look.

What we have is a multi-level 'rescue mission'. You, playing Jake, and a 'chum' playing Duke (if you have any chums, that is) must rescue Professor Sarah Bellum (Cerebellum. Geddit?) and free the enslaved hostages before they're all turned into Robo Zombies. All this action takes place on the mysterious Planet X, home to The Reptilons, evil tyrants of the Universe (etc. etc. etc.).

There are absolutely squillions of levels to get through, so how about taking a look at one? Right. It's a factory. There's quite a large floor space which can be explored thanks to the four-way scrolling. There's an escalator leading up to the next storey but unfortunately it doesn't seem to be working. Nope, things just aren't that easy in computer games. Somewhere on the floor you're on, there's a switch which you have to touch before the stairs start moving. However, you'll be pleased to hear that the switch isn't the only thing in your vicinity. No, as well as the switch there are nasties. The Reptilons. And there are absolutely billions of the little buggers. Slow ones that you can easily out-manoeuvre, medium-paced ones that are less easily avoided, fast ones that home in on you and give you real grief. Plus small ones that – well, let's just say that there are a lot of different types. You can avoid them or shoot them. Some of them, when shot, release a little green blob which enhances your firepower when picked up (you have a laser and numerous bombs, by the way).

As well as the Reptilons, each floor contains a few humans. They're slaves, you see, and they're waiting to be freed – just touch them and they get beamed up by your orbiting spaceship. Oh, sorry, didn't we mention the orbiting spaceship? Erm, there's an orbiting spaceship. There. Mentioned it. Anyway, frazzle/avoid the Reptilons, free the slaves, destroy any computer terminals you happen to see, blow up the crates (which contain 'gifts'), turn the escalator switch on, find the escalator and go up. And then you have to do it again on the next floor (there are several floors to each level – all with different configurations and added hazards). When you reach the top floor, you have to find the 'Port-O-Matic', which is a wibbly sort of test tube thing that sucks you in and spurts you to the next level.





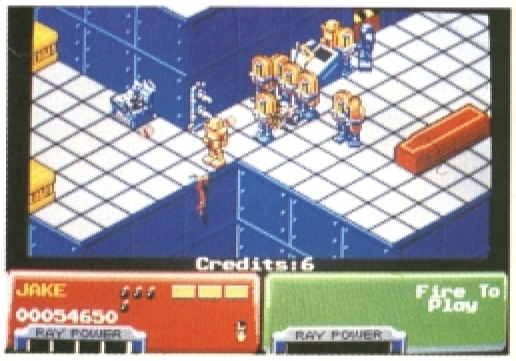
Where's the escalator 'on' switch?

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	E.F.T.P.O.T.R.M.
PUBLISHER	Domark
PRICE	ST/Amiga £19.99 PC £24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	May



Dunc: Well, well, well. I haven't seen an isometric game for ages and this is a good one – sort of vaguely similar in style to *Paradroid* or *Quazatron*. What makes or breaks a game of this type is a) the speed, and b) the attention to detail. Well, in the speed



About to be attacked by some Robo Weetabix, Jake falls over the edge.

stakes *EFTPOTRM* scores well. There are loads of sprites darting about all over the shop. So what about the attention to detail? Excellent, that's what. The music ties in with the action absolutely – it's one of those games where you don't turn the sound off. There are lots of nice touches (such as the sprite falling over the edge of a floor, grabbing hold of it and dragging himself back up – much better than putting walls everywhere). The only thing missing was on the escalators – where are the Swedish tourists with their giant aisle-blocking rucksacks?

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
No hassle whatsoever, just non-stop action.

EFTPOTRM is an absolute hoot to play. Fast paced action and a tiny bit of exploring spliced together with a jaunty tune. Addictive stuff.

GRAPHICS 83 ADDICTIVENESS 83 SOUND 89 EXECUTION 82 OVERALL 83

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THE ALSO RANS!

In an ideal world ZERO would be rather like the Tardis: infinite room for reviews inside but without being the size of the Encyclopedia Britannica. Unfortunately it's not, so here's a list of what we also had a peek at:

▶ **A-10 TANK KILLER** Dynamic/Activision
▶ **BLOODWYCH DATA DISKS** Imageworks/Mirrorsoft
▶ **CASTLE MASTER** Incentive
▶ **CLOUD KINGDOMS** Logotron
COLORIS Avesoft
▶ **CRACKDOWN** US Gold
▶ **DAVID WOLF SECRET AGENT** Dynamic/Activision
▶ **DRAGON'S LAIR: ESCAPE FROM SINGE'S CASTLE** Empire
▶ **DYTER 07** Rainbow Arts
▶ **FIRE BRIGADE** Mindscape
FOOTBALL CRAZY ESP
GRAND NATIONAL Elite
▶ **GRAVITY** Imageworks/Mirrorsoft
▶ **HARPOON** PSS/Mirrorsoft
HOT ROD Activision
HYPERACTION Impressions
▶ **INFESTATION** Psygnosis
ISLAND OF LOST HOPE Gainstar
▶ **IVANHOE** Ocean
LORDS OF WAR Gainstar
OVERLANDER Elite
PARIS DAKAR RALLY Tomahawk
PINBALL MAGIC US Gold
PREMIER COLLECTION 3 Hewson
SCRAMBLE SPIRITS Grandslam
▶ **SKI OR DIE** Electronic Arts
SORCEROR'S APPRENTICE CRL
SPACE HARRIER REMIX Elite
▶ **THE COLONY** Mindscape
▶ **TV SPORTS BASKETBALL** Cinemaware/Mirrorsoft
▶ **WARHEAD** Activision

The games marked with a ▶ are particularly worth taking a butchers at...

NINJA SPIRIT



***Paul Lakin* thought that *Ninja Spirit* was a Japanese whisky so he was more than a little keen to try it out.**

Being a ninja is fun but wouldn't it be so much more fun to be a wolf? Great lifestyle, neat line in fur coats and no income tax worries. Mind you the change from ninja to wolf is not an easy one. You've got to battle through seven levels of blood and gore before you get a chance to knock off the Last Warlock and then go all white and hairy.

***Ninja Spirit* is, you'll not be surprised to know, a beat 'em up or more precisely a slash 'em up, cut 'em up and even blow 'em up. After all, swords are soooo passé darling, a well dressed ninja wouldn't dream of leaving home without a few death-stars, time bombs and all those other essential fashion accessories.**



What-ho! Bertie old bean! It's Ninjas at six o'clock!

The range of weapons is matched by a fearsome range of meanies including giant swordsmen, some strange bods with kites and of course more nasty ninjas than you can shake a bamboo shoot at.

To put the odds more in your favour, it's possible to pick up a few ghostly ninjas (ninja spirits no less) who follow you round like a bad dose of halitosis and fight your fights with you.

Most of the action takes place over horizontally scrolling screens but there are also a couple of tricky little sections of vertical scrolling as you climb cliffs avoiding puffs of poisoned gas or fall down them avoiding evil spirits. Coo.

ST

Paul: What is it with Ninjas that makes them so flippin' hyperactive? While the rest of us potter round in jeans and jumpers making cups of coffee and watching repeats of *The Sweeney* on telly, Ninjas seem to feel obliged to wrap bits of cloth round their heads and go kicking the blancmange out of anyone that upsets them. For goodness' sake, what are they on? Let's face it Ninja games are much of a muchness. Settings may vary from crime-ridden New York to mystical Japan but the idea is basically the same. Still they're big in the arcades which is where Ninja Spirits started its life.

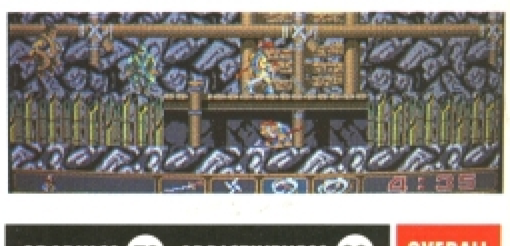
Obviously all ninja games have bits and bobs added to them in an attempt to stand out. Some of the enemies and weapons are fun; the burning belt is particularly neat, ideal for getting onto those crowded rush hour buses. However, quite a few sprites are disappointing in the looks department, though they're well animated.

Basically (he said in his best conclusion type of voice) this is a pretty standard ninja game. Not particularly special but a good example of its type.

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
Ninjas never lose their karma.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Ninja Spirit
PUBLISHER	Activision
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	Out now



GRAPHICS	79	ADDICTIVENESS	80
SOUND	75	EXECUTION	84

OVERALL 80

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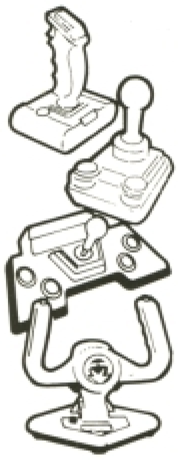
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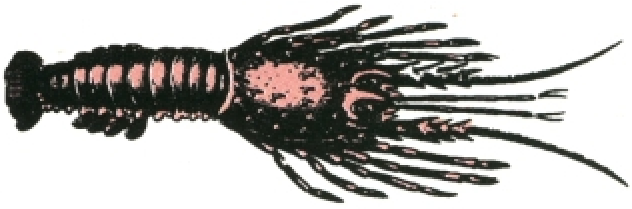
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ALL YOU GOTTA DO

As well as fish you might want to take photos of a Lifeguard like in *Baywatch* f'rinstance. *Baywatch* now there's a series where there's loads happening (except acting). Look at the photo above and tell us, in less than 20 words, what's going to happen next. Once you've done that, stick your answer on the form below and send it by Royal Whale to **I've Got Whelks On My Cockle Compo, ZERO Compos, PO Box 1509, Enfield, Middlesex, EN1 1LQ.**

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● Any employees of Activision or Dennis Oneshots caught entering will be exposed to 20 continuous episodes of *Baywatch*. ● Any entries received after 31May 1990 will plummet to the bottom of the ocean. ● The Ed's a part-time lifeguard so what he says goes.

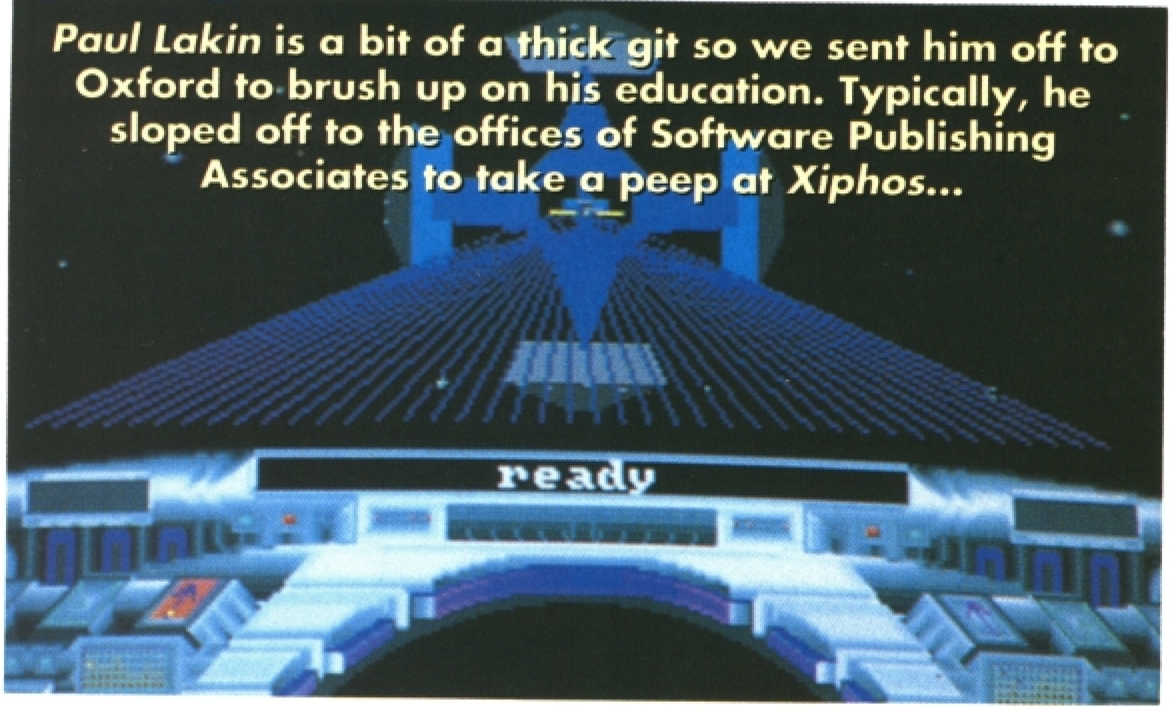


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UNDER WRAPS



XIPHOS



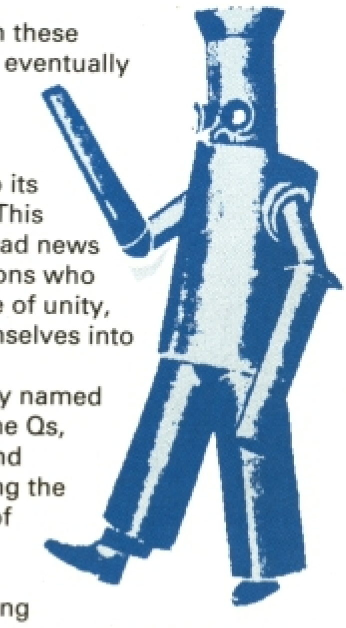
***Paul Lakin* is a bit of a thick git so we sent him off to Oxford to brush up on his education. Typically, he sloped off to the offices of Software Publishing Associates to take a peep at *Xiphos*...**

"Ah Oxford," I thought, "now there's a good place to go on a golden Friday afternoon. All I have to do is to get a bit lost (something I'm pretty good at) and I can get a bit of sightseeing done." Any thoughts of spending a leafy day in the dreaming spires were soon ditched when I discovered that Software Publishing Associates (aka Voodoo) were based all of three paces from the flippin' station. So instead of gazing at crumbling towers and shady quads I soon found myself looking at some pretty amazing 3D vector graphics. Ah well, times change and *Xiphos* was well worth looking at. Besides it wasn't raining inside the SPA offices.

THE STORY SO FAR

Ever wanted to shut yourself off on a desert island miles away from anyone? If so you'd get on well with the Xiphons, who got so fed up with the hussle and bustle of mainstream universe life that they shut themselves off in a system of artificial universes. At the centre of these, they constructed a giant artificial intelligence which they imaginatively called Xiphos.

This creation was supposed to protect and guide the Xiphons but, as is the way with these machines, it eventually got ideas above its station and started to do its own thang. This was rather bad news for the Xiphons who lost all sense of unity, formed themselves into two factions (provisionally named the Ps and the Qs, hem hem) and started kicking the plasma out of each other.

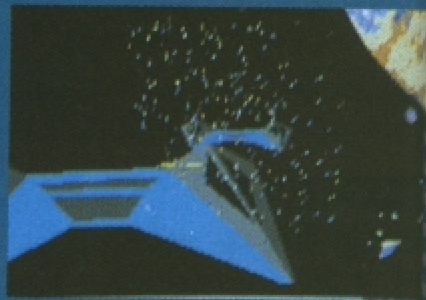


War isn't noted for being terribly enviromentally friendly and by the time the game starts, all the planets in the Xiphons' universe have become uninhabitable. The Ps and Q's live on space stations from which they launch attacks against each other.

Your mission (if you decide to accept it) is to journey through the Xiphon's universes, locate the mighty Xiphos and destroy it. Pretty straightforward really. Except of course that there are six universes to get through and there's a flippin' great war going on and you haven't got enough supplies to get across even one universe and... well, I won't go on, you might get depressed.

THE G

Before the game there was the graphics package. Having spent much of its early years in developing compilers for business systems (yawn), Software Publishing Associates developed a jolly exciting 3D compiler which it called Simula. Not exactly a



revolutionary name but the package itself is unusual in that barely uses any Assembly Code This has not deprived the graphics of any of their speed o smoothness but it has meant th programmers are no longer lumbered with the on screen design and animation of the shi or stations. Using detailed 'scripts', a designer who is reasonably program literate ca do all these things himself.

Obviously there are

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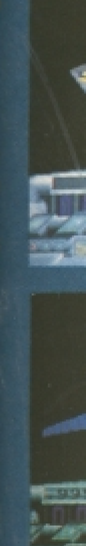


THIRD PART

***Xiphos* is remarkable for th amount of on-screen actio it incorporates. To describ the screens as busy is really something of an understatement**

What is particularly impressive about the action is th 'realistic' response of the other ships to your presence. The third person element of the game means that it is perfectly possibl for you to sit back and watch th action. However, once you intervene, the ships you attack will make the appropriate responses – either high-tailing it to safety or, more likely, turning round and blasting you out of th sky.

The response of the various ship and thingies to you and each other has been developed using proximity zones. Each ship or sprite has such a zone (though it's obviously not visible on screen) and if it makes contact with another zone the computer will identify what it is and react accordingly. This enables realisti combat to go on all around you without your intervening once.



E GAPHICS

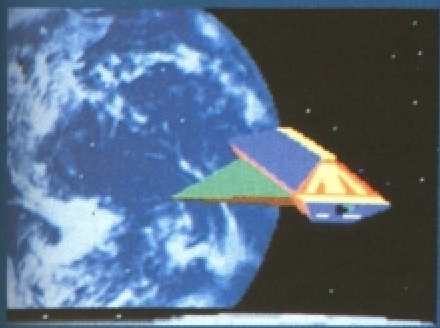
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limitations to what can be done. "You can't fudge reality," says SPA co-founder Michael Cech-Lucas, but there's no harm in trying. Besides, with a package like that it seemed silly not to use it to develop a game.

One of the most striking things about the graphics in *Xiphos* is the amount of surface detail. As well as insignia, the space ships and stations also show damage such as holes and dents and in more serious situations, wings and other appendages are blown off. There's a lot of small scale animation such as gun recoil and even engine flames. SPA is sufficiently pleased with the results to be planning a second game that will "get down onto the planet surfaces."

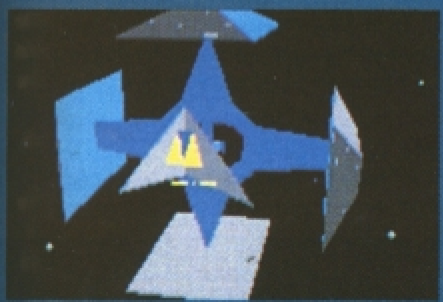


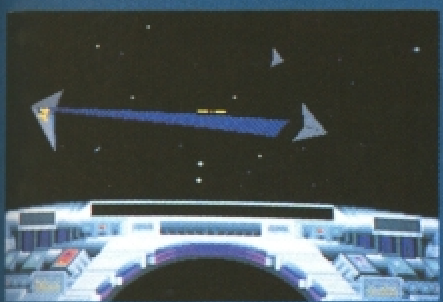
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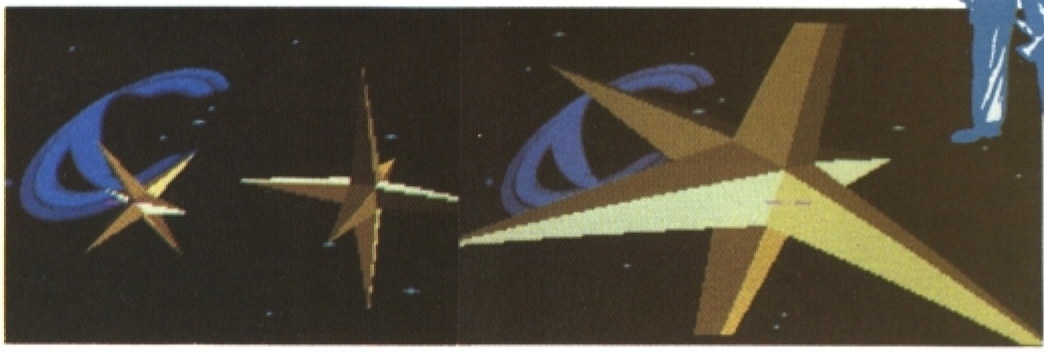
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THE GAME

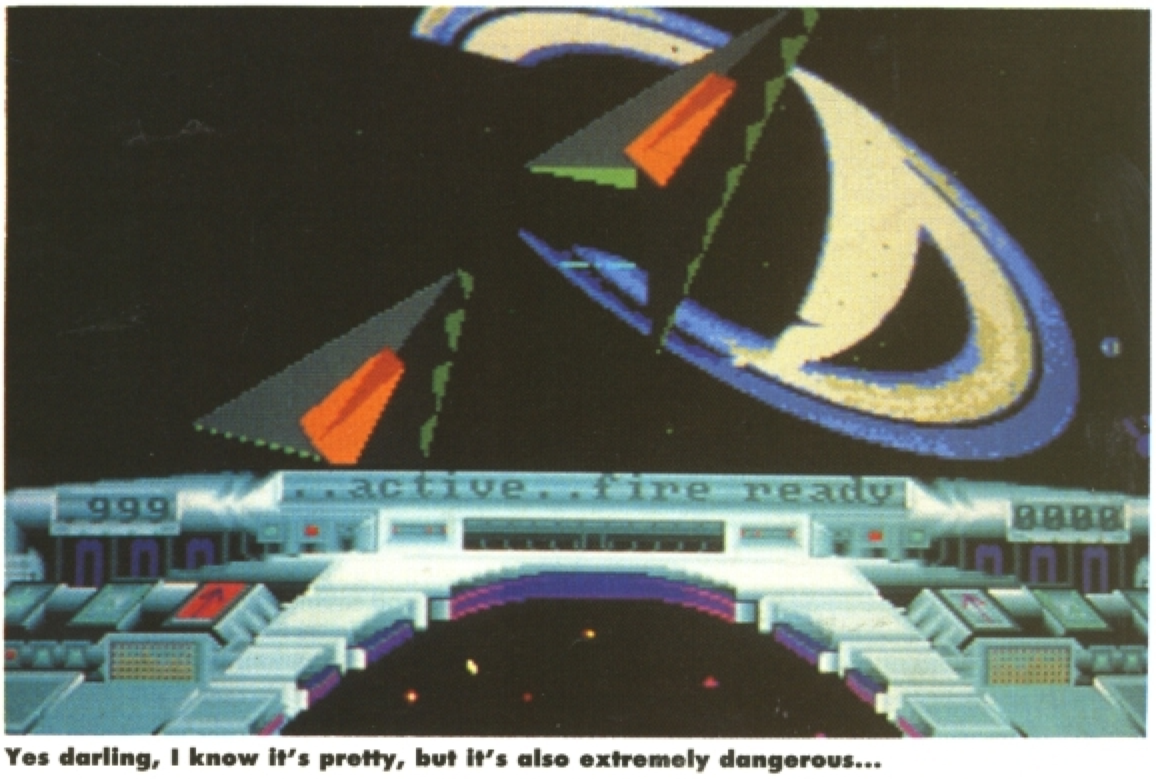
Xiphos is a bit of everything; strategy, shoot 'em up, third party combat, with a bit of text adventure too. Viewing the action from the bridge of your ship and using the mouse, joystick or keyboard to control direction, you must navigate through the universe picking up supplies and info from space stations. Your ultimate objectives are the polar stations which are your launch pads into the next universe.

The ship can be navigated in three different ways. Obviously looking through the... erm... the... well, what do you call the front bit of a space ship? The windscreen? Well, whatever it's called, looking through it is the most straight-forward way to see where you are and where you're going. There's also a small radar system that can be called up on screen to give you a bit of advance warning of danger (though some ships have radar screening, which is dashed unsporting really).

For really long term planning it's possible to call up a map of the universe, which may be incomplete or even downright inaccurate but will give you a vague idea of the location of space stations, polar bases and the like. Now as anyone who has tried reading an AA Road Atlas while driving down the fast lane of the M1 will tell you, maps and movement don't mix. Spend too long looking for the right route and you'll find yourself wrapped round a large meteorite. (Which is a bit of a surprise on the M1.) However, this is not problem in *Xiphos*, because while the map is on screen, it is still possible to see shadows through it showing your immediate view. This is a pretty neat trick and a good looking effect. It's also devilishly simple, being created by using different shades of the same colour for the map and the background.



If despite your map-reading you get enmeshed in a scrap, you'll be encouraged to know that your ship is equipped with beam weapon's, particle weapons missiles and, most importantly, deflector shields. There's even a tractor beam which creates a protective shield of agricultural machinery round the ship. Actually that's a lie. What it really does is attract or repel

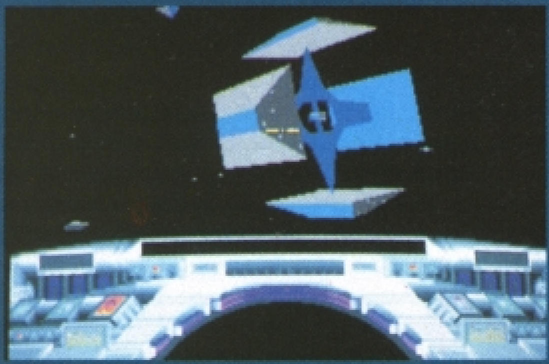


Yes darling, I know it's pretty, but it's also extremely dangerous...

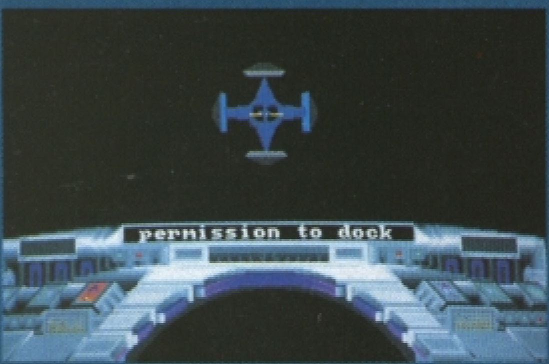
BEGINNERS GUIDE TO DOCKING



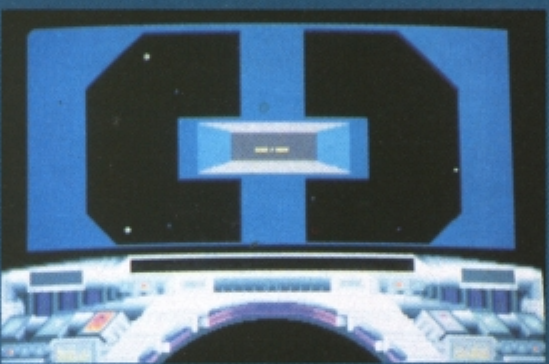
Docking a spaceship can be a tricky job. Fortunately the Blue Peter team have prepared a step by step guide. Remember to get an adult to help you, especially if there is any cutting to do. Next week, advent crowns.



1 First take one friendly space station (here's one I prepared earlier) and fly towards it.



2 Request permission to land. Ignore response and try to land anyway.



3 Lock onto tracking beam, switch to auto-pilot and open up a copy of *Floyd On Flying Food*.

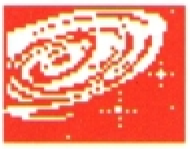


4 Having arrived at centre of space station attempt to buy food, fuel and back issues of ZERO.

objects at medium range.

All these useful instruments drain energy and have to be used sparingly. It's a big universe out there and you've got six to get through. So think before you shoot. And then shoot anyway.

THE UNIVERSES



Although the Xiphons have created six concentric universes, none of them is visible from – or even appears to occupy any space within – other universes. Working on the good old Tardis theory, the universes are a lot bigger on the inside than the outside.

Transport between universes is performed via polar stations which will launch you arrow-like into the next level. However, to reach one of these polar stations you'll need supplies and perhaps even something in the way of a map. And how are you going to pay for all your little necessities? Where are you going to get all your dosh from, eh? It doesn't just grow on trees you know and even if it did that'd be no good 'cos there are no trees in space, are there?

Instead of trees you have battles which aren't as pretty but pay better...

THE BATTLES



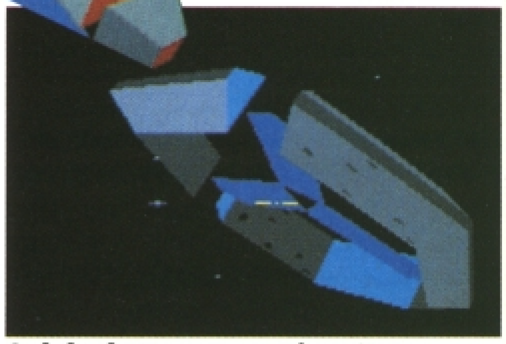
Both the Ps and Qs will swap proven 'kills' of their opponents for credits with which to buy fuel, weapons and maps. When you're short of a few readies, your best bet is to scout round for a particularly one-sided battle. Join in on the strongest side and try to down a few of the weak guys. Really it's just like a gang-land mugging. However, once you've joined in a battle then your splendid isolation is all over. The side you attack will turn round and start giving as good as it gets (and, if you're really unlucky, better). Having got yourself a few credits fom this bit of controlled violence, then off you jolly well toddle to the nearest space station and start to spend, spend, spend!

SPACE STATIONS



Each level contains between 20 and 50 space stations belonging to either the Ps or Qs. On approaching a station, it's important to know who it belongs to. Let's face it, it's no good arriving at a space station manned by the Ps and saying "Look guys, I've blasted about 35 P ships out of existence". So remember to mind your Ps and Qs. *(It had to come. Ed.)* Having made sure that this station is going to like what you're selling, it's time to land





Ooh look, a space station. Now, where's the buffet?

and start haggling.

This is where an element of text adventure appears in the game. The station will set prices for the various items you want to buy. You can go with that or offer less. If the space station gets really fed up with your tightfisted-ness then it might eject you or even start tickling your belly with lasers.

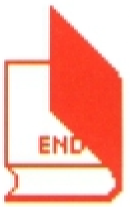
SHIPS AND MONSTERS



Although there are only two sides in the inter-tribe wars there are a lot more than two types of ship. They are considerably more interesting than your average 3D vector graphics jobbies, incorporating curved wings, distinctive emblems and, in the thin atmosphere of the second universe, there are even ships which can flap their wings.

There are also flying monsters which tootle about generally getting in your way and making a nuisance of themselves. At the moment they are relatively harmless but the game isn't yet finished.

THE END SORT OF BIT



Xiphos is shaping up to be rather on the large side. After all, universes are not small things. However, if strategy and thought are all a bit demanding for you then it's possible to play the game as a one level shoot 'em up. For this, you remain in the first universe but the opposition becomes progressively stiffer. It's not a bad way of honing your skills prior to entering the game proper.

Once in that game, you're in a wonderful world of 3D action, strategy and danger. Coming soon to a stellar system near you.



WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Xiphos
PUBLISHER	Electronic Zoo
PRICE	To be announced
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	April/May

520ST-FM SUPER PACK



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CRYSTAL TIPS*

***AND ALISTAIR**

Finding that your game prowess isn't quite what it used to be (or ever has been for that matter)? Yearning to put on a jolly good show? Then you've turned to the right pages. A word of warning though: only be caught reading them if you *want* to be branded a 'cissy'.

F-29 RETA

Albeit somewhat late, *F-29 Retaliator* should be available eve
Digital Image Design to find out how the game actually looks



Good Lord! Has it really been three months since we ZERO-Heroed *F-29*? Since then Ocean have been tweaking the game further and this has led to less than complimentary rumours circulating as to the reason for its absence. Well the game is out now, so I went to Digital Image Design, the *Retaliator* programmers, to see how it looks!

Anyway, I'm pleased to report that *F-29* looks every bit as good as it did when we first reviewed it. And yep, that all important cockpit look up view is now included, so you can see an instrument free full panoramic view. I had Martin Kenwright the designer and author of *F-29*, 'fly' me through some missions to give you some tips on staying alive.

TAKING OFF

If you want your game to last that little bit longer, then being proficient at this bit could be very beneficial! Actually, it's not that hard to get airborne, but there are a couple of things to remember if you want to avoid incurring damage. If you leave your brakes on and exceed 70 rpm, then this will damage your landing gear. You should take off at 200 knots, with 90 per cent thrust. You should retract your gear before you reach 320 knots or again you'll risk damaging it! (You have to be a bit dim to do this actually, 'cos you get a yellow warning light at 240mph.) If you use your flaps, then it's also advisable to keep a close eye on your speed. This handy 'wing furniture' is prone to fall off at speeds in excess of 360mph (again, you'll get a warning at 260 mph).

Incidentally, once you get airborne you'll be impressed by the handling characteristics of these babies! They're STOL (Short Take Off And Landing) aircraft, and they can 'go ballistic' ie go into vertical flight practically as soon as they're airborne!

LANDING

Er, this bit is a tad trickier.. but if you don't land, then you won't complete a mission. When your runway appears – about 15-20 miles away – centre your craft, using the centre line of the runway as a reference point. Decrease speed to 300 mph and your height to 500/600 feet. Lift your nose slightly as you approach and decrease your height to 250 feet and your speed to 180/200 mph. Lower flaps and gear and keep that centre line in the right place. The moment you touch down dip your nose, reduce thrust and apply the brakes. The moment the craft stops, the game will access the end of mission screen. Oh, and if you land at an enemy airfield you'll get captured.

G-FORCE

Pulling too many 'G's will cause you to 'Redout' or 'Blackout'. Blackouts occur when you pull nine or more G's - for example if you bank and turn at high speed.

Redouts occur when you pull three or more negative 'G' – for example, if you climb very rapidly then dive at high speed. What happens is that you get a massive rush of blood to the head. It's rather like the feeling you get going over a hump back bridge.

The length of time that you pass out is proportional to the manoeuvre speed.



Hurrah! This greeting results from my posting to the South Pacific "There ain't nothing like a Dame.. Happy happy happy happy talk"

A ATOR

ble even speak, so we sent *David Wilson* to y looks and some special ZERO tips.



And yep, nstrument F-29, 'fly'

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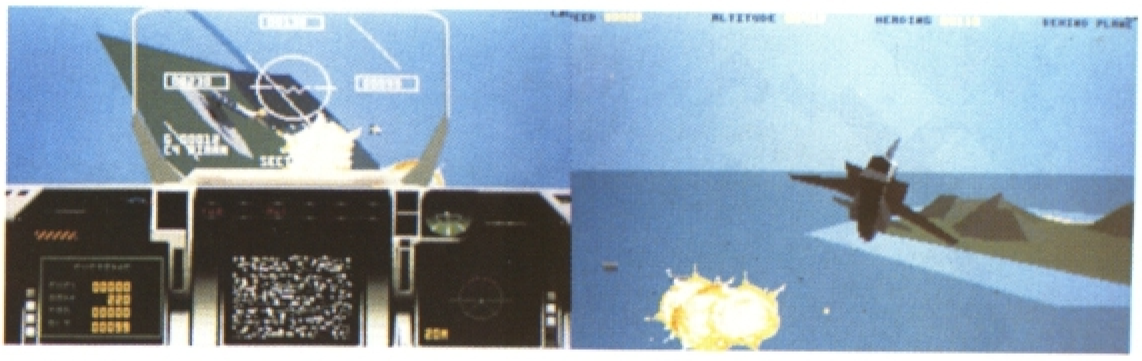
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TANK BATTLES

If your mission involves getting involved in a tank battle, then don't expect combatants to stop till you arrive on the scene! Oh no, the participants will merrily battle it out amongst themselves and there's a random factor to determine who will win. In fact this can prove quite helpful as a navigational aid(!) since the explosions from the battle will be visible before the tanks themselves! In theory you could actually complete this mission without even taking off if the allied tanks destroy all the enemy before you arrive! In practice though, the odds are against this so here's the best way to go about getting involved. Fly in low and fast and drop a CSW (Conventional Stand Off Weapon). This device has 20 warheads and will in effect blanket bomb the enemy. Speed is of the essence, since with superior numbers the enemy will annihilate the 'friendly' tanks if you hang about too long!

SEA BATTLES

Like tank battles these will quite happily resolve themselves without your participation. To ensure a victory for the correct side though, it'd be advisable to go for it! Basically the same rules apply as in a tank battle, but Martin recommends you fly across the bows of the ship in question and drop a MRASM. Ships basically have a strength factor programmed in and missiles have a damage factor proportionate to their destructiveness. To sink a ship you'll need to inflict damage up to or over the strength of the ship in question.



Gad! It's the enemy fleet! But you can expect cruisers to have nice red stars on the rear deck! Hurrah!

AVOIDING SAMs

1. What to do if the SAM site is tracking you.

If you aren't involved in air to air combat, then it's a good idea to keep an eye out for SAMs. (Evidently the bad guys think it's too risky to launch SAMs into a dogfight for fear of hitting their own planes. Phew!) If you enter a sector with a SAM site in it, then a missile could be launched at you anytime between 2 seconds and five minutes(!). Before launch, the site will try to track your airplane, so as to target the SAM. The best defence at this stage is to fly below 200 feet in Stealth mode (this will be confirmed by your Stealth light appearing in your RWR – that's Radar Warning Receiver to you rookies). You'll get a 'Threat' light and an audible signal in the cockpit when your ECM panel detects the SAM's radar signals. Shut down your radar and lose height. You could switch on your ECMs of course and this could suffice to jam the enemy radar. This is fine if the enemy know where you are. If however they don't, then since ECMs are actually an emission from your plane, it is possible for this signal to be tracked to locate you! Blimey!

2. What to do if a SAM is launched.

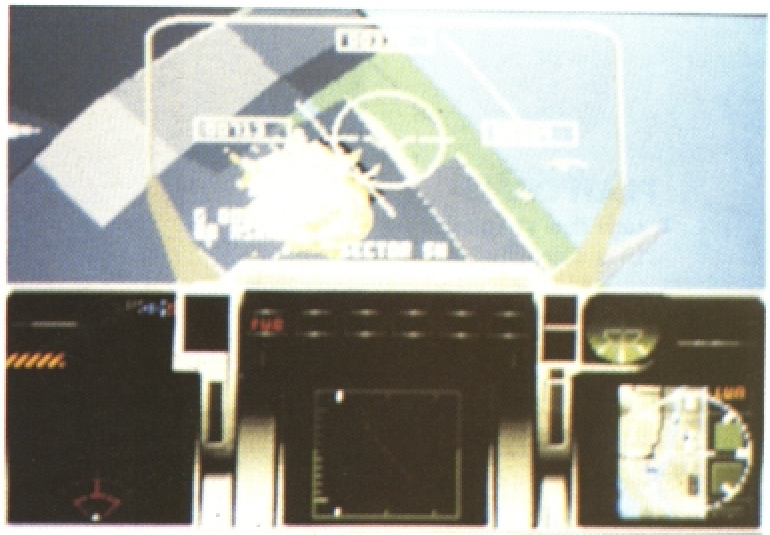
If you are detected by the enemy (ie you are a target) then your missile warning light will come on and the warning signal will warble. Basically you won't be able to outrun a SAM, so don't try it! Your best bet, if the missile is behind you, is to brake rapidly and then bank sharply to face it. Then go into a steep inverted dive, followed by a flip-off to the left or right. Oh and be sure to chuck out loads of chaff throughout this manoeuvre!

FULCRUMS AND FLANKERS

There are two types of enemy plane pitted against you in *F-29*, the Mig-29 'Fulcrum' a single seat fighter and the Sukhoi Su-27 'Flanker B'. The planes not only look similar but they also behave in a similar manner. The Flankers are significantly 'harder' and can sustain more damage than a Fulcrum so watch out for them! Migs are assigned to various way-points and patrol areas. They carry four air-to-air missiles and cannon, as well as chaff and flares. (As you follow a Mig and lob a sidewinder at it you can actually watch them dump chaff in an attempt to fool the missile's guidance!)

In the European scenario, War Update 3, Mission 6, you'll come up against a Mig-29 Hunting Squadron. These boys are aces and this translates in gameplay into the planes having twice as many missiles and chaff as normal Migs! Migs have a flight model of their own and fly like a real plane. But they still have certain characteristics. If you get behind a pair of Migs they'll always perform a 'split -S' – diving and spinning to get behind you. Also beware of their tendancy to come 'out of the sun'. They frequently manoeuvre into a position to dive down onto you.

The radar of enemy fighters is comparable to your own ie the enemy will see you at the same time as you see them, so beware.



Blasting buildings passes time, but don't hit a church or you'll risk court martial!

BOMBING HOSPITALS OR CHURCHES OR ALLIES.

Don't. It'll only end in tears! (Well, in negative points actually).

STOP



Two Mig-29 Fulcrums demonsrate the 'wibbly split-S whizz around behind me' manoeuvre.

ZERO MAP

BLACK TIGER

Are you suffering from severe *Black Tiger* troubles? Then fret no more 'cos ZERO and Tiertex have got together to bring you the complete map of where to go, what to grab and who to duff up...

KEY

PLATFORMS
Touch the striped bits and die!

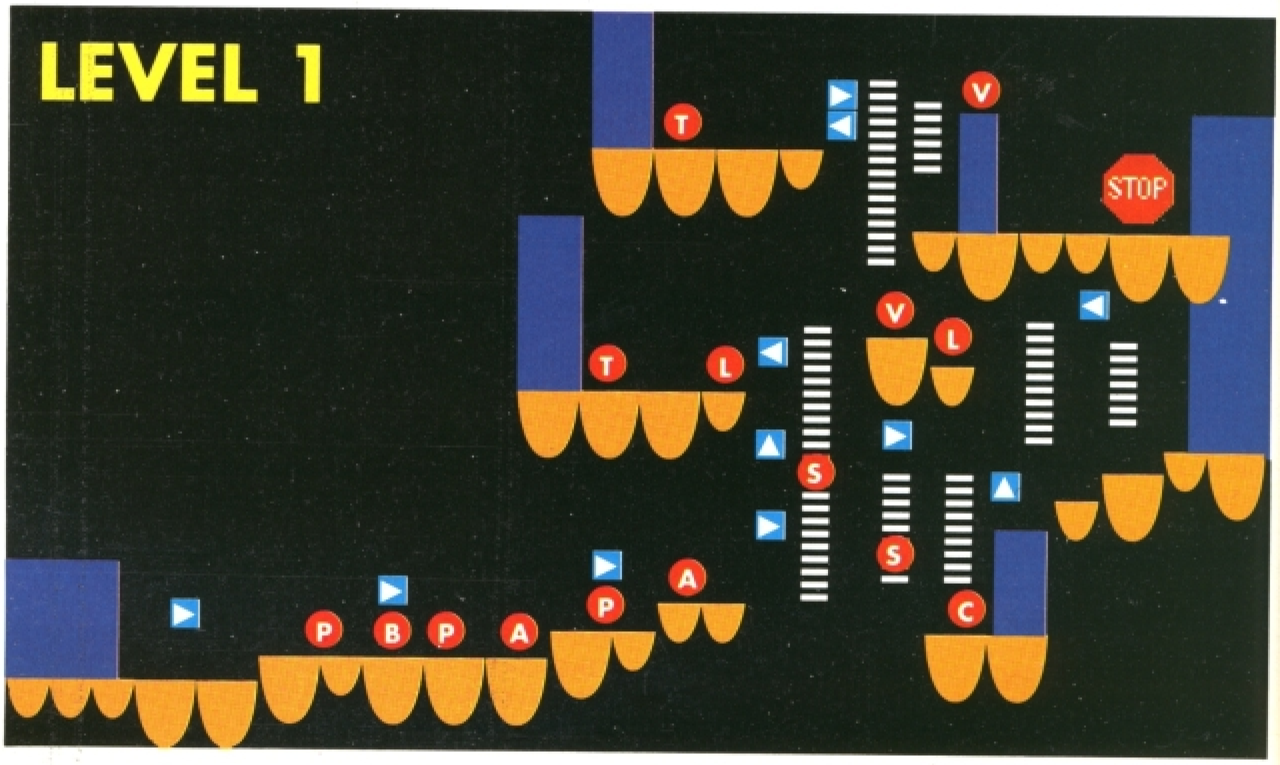
SIGNPOSTS
These suggest the way to go.

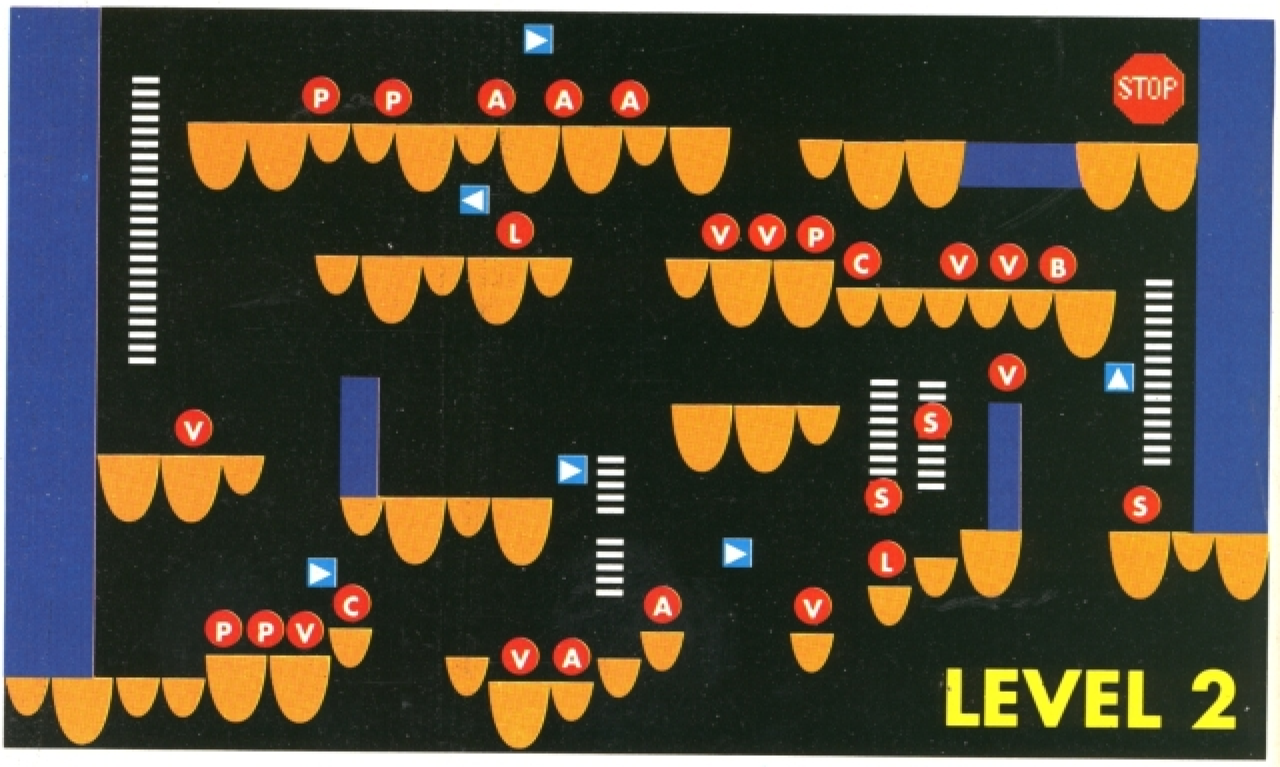
LADDERS

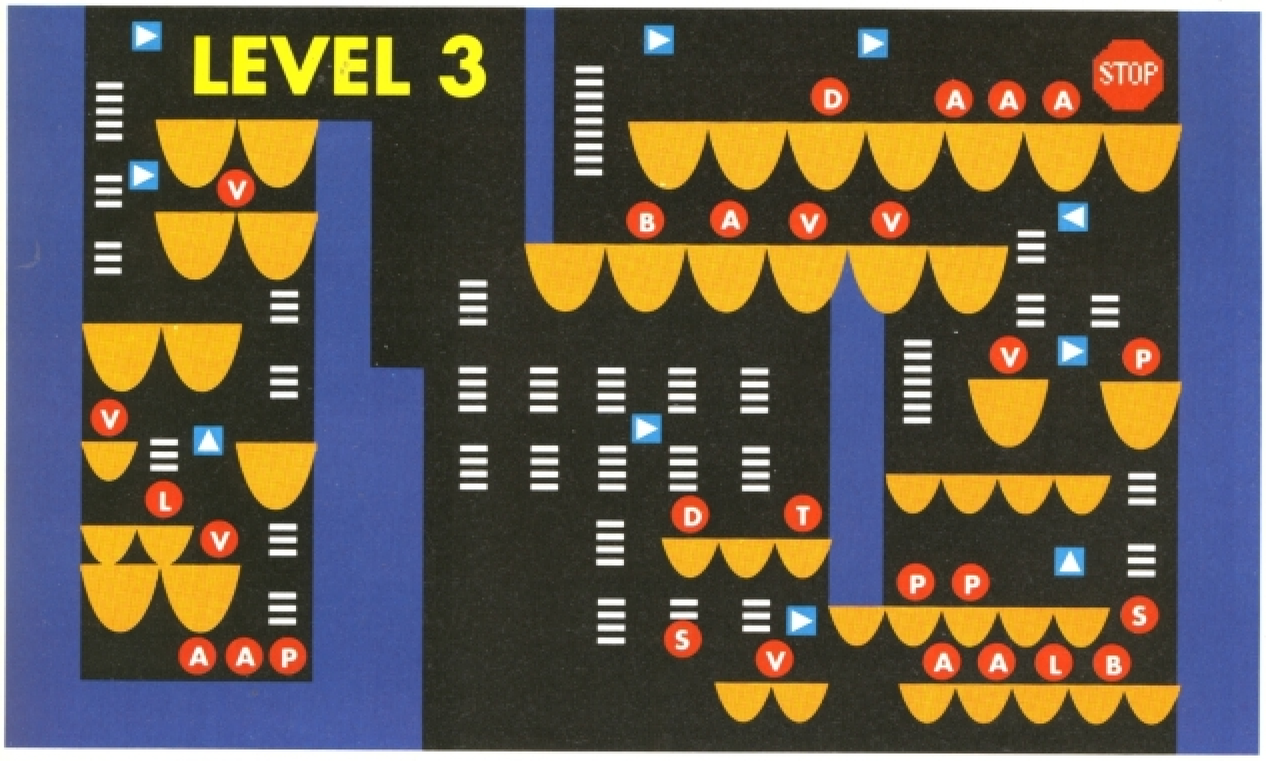
CHEST

FIREMAN

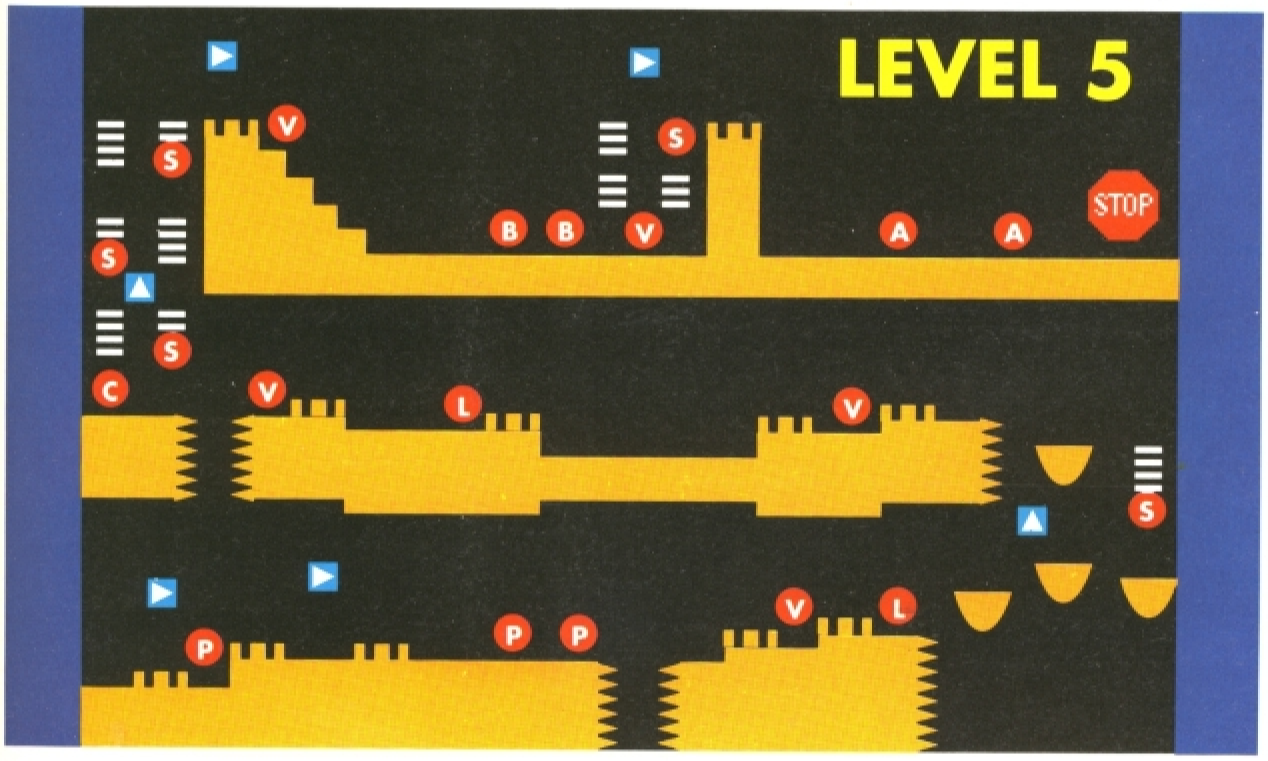
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A AXEMAN

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'To boldly hack where no hacker has hacked before'. *Jon North* POKES about a bit and pulls a few juicy routines out of the hat...

THE UNTOUCHABLES (ST)

Mark Lawrence has been at it again (k-fnick!) and has done something a bit funky to this Ocean masterpiece. With this routine you have infinite energy on all levels and also infinite time on levels 3 and 6. Type it in and RUN it with the original disk in the drive.

```
10 REM THE UNTOUCHABLES BY MARK
LAWRENCE
20 T=0:OPTION BASE 1:DIM
A%(1024):CHEAT=VARPTR(A%(1))
30 DEF SEG=0:REM REMOVE THIS LINE
IF USING NEW BASIC
40 READ B$:B=VAL("&H"+B$)
50 WHILE B<&H10000
60 POKE
CHEAT+X,B:T=T+B:X=X+2:READ
B$:B=VAL("&H"+B$)
70 WEND
80 IF T<>B THEN PRINT "DATA
ERROR":STOP
90 CALL CHEAT
100 DATA 42A7,3F3C,0020,4E41,2C78,
04C6,3EBC,0001
110 DATA 2F0E,2F3C,0004,0002,4E4D,
4FF9,0008,0000
120 DATA 41FA,001E,3418,224E,7200,
3018,0380,6702
130 DATA 3218,D2C0,32D8,51C9,FFFC,
51CA,FFEA,4ED6
140 DATA 0001,0048,41F9,004F,0041,
43FA,0008,2149
150 DATA 009A,4ED0,41F9,0005,8010,
20BC,4EF8,0140
160 DATA 217C,4EF8,014A,31A4,45FA,
0010,43F8,0140
170 DATA 721F,22DA,51C9,FFFC,4ED0,
31C0,0152,4EF9
180 DATA 0005,A838,41FA,001C,7000,
1028,0000,D0C0
190 DATA 43F9,0006,3000,3018,D2D8,
3298,5340,66F8
200 DATA 4E75,0606,0C12,1C22,0001,
280C,6012,0001
210 DATA 2180,600A,0002,2334,4A38,
046A,4A30,0001
220 DATA 2E36,6074,0002,2632,4A38,
0320,4A38,0000
230 DATA 0000,00164A84
```

WARP (Amiga)

I don't really rate this game very highly (erm... in fact I don't rate it at all) but **Mark** doesn't really care because he's hacked it anyway. Slap this into AmigaBasic, insert the game disk, cancel the two requesters (and no your copy isn't knackered) then run it. Shut your eyes and think of Basildon in Essex and infy lives will be yours.

```
10 REM WARP BY MARK LAWRENCE
20 T=0:X=0:DIM CHEAT%(1024)
30 READ A$:A=VAL("&H"+A$)
40 WHILE A$<>"X"
50 CHEAT%(X)=A:T=T+A
60 READ A$:A=VAL("&H"+A$)
70 WEND:READ A
80 IF T<>A THEN PRINT "ERROR":STOP
90 C=VARPTR(CHEAT%(0)):CALL C
100 DATA 7E40,E98F,7C30,2C78,0004
110 DATA 7202,7060,E988,4EAE,FF3A
120 DATA 2840,6602,4E75,70FF,4EAE
130 DATA FEB6,2200,5280,67F2,4BEC
140 DATA 0048,3AC7,429D,3AC1,93C9
150 DATA 4EAE,FEDA,2AC0,2A8D,2B4D
160 DATA 0008,589D,4295,4BEC,0008
170 DATA 1ABC,0005,41ED,0038,5C8D
180 DATA 2AC8,3A86,41FA,0050,7000
190 DATA 7200,224C,4EAE,FE44,4A80
200 DATA 66B2,7002,224C,49EC,0100
210 DATA 3340,001C,41E9,0024,20C7
220 DATA 20CC,4290,3346,0012,4EAE
230 DATA FE38,41FA,0032,3418,3018
240 DATA 721F,C240,EA48,D040,43F4
250 DATA 0000,32D8,51C9,FFFC,51CA
260 DATA FFEA,4EEC,000C,7472,6163
270 DATA 6B64,6973,6B2E,6465,7669
280 DATA 6365,0000,0003,0560,01FF
290 DATA 0E81,6000,0316,401E,51C8
300 DATA FCE0,41FA,0008,2F48,28A6
310 DATA 4ED7,41F9,0001,4EC0,30FC
320 DATA 4EF9,43FA,0008,2089,4EE8
330 DATA FEC6,4CDF,7FFF,43FA,0016
340 DATA 45E8,0066,7007,24D9,51C8
350 DATA FFFC,317C,6004,0060,4ED0
360 DATA 43F8,323C,4A79,31C1,2E34
370 DATA 31C1,7DBE,33C1,0001,2E34
380 DATA 33C1,0000,80C2,4EF8,1600
390 DATA 0000,X,01776103
```

CHAMBERS OF SHAOLIN (ST)

Mark's final hack this month (phew) is for infinite energy and more powerful punches and kicks in the fight sequence of this little beatarama. How does this man do so much so quickly? Amazing. Anyway, type this lot into your ST, insert the Disk A and RUN it.

```
10 REM CHAMBERS OF SHAOLIN BY
MARK LAWRENCE
20 T=0:OPTION BASE 1:DIM
A%(1024):CHEAT=VARPTR(A%(1))
30 DEF SEG=0:REM REMOVE THIS LINE
IF USING NEW BASIC
40 READ B$:B=VAL("&H"+B$)
50 WHILE B<&H10000
60 POKE
CHEAT+X,B:T=T+B:X=X+2:READ
B$:B=VAL("&H"+B$)
70 WEND
80 IF T<>B THEN PRINT "DATA
ERROR":STOP
90 CALL CHEAT
100 DATA 42A7,3F3C,0020,4E41,2C78,
04C6,3EBC,0001
110 DATA 2F0E,2F3C,0004,0002,4E4D,
4FF9,0008,0000
120 DATA 41FA,001E,3418,224E,7200,
3018,0380,6702
130 DATA 3218,D2C0,32D8,51C9,FFFC,
51CA,FFEA,4ED6
140 DATA 0001,00FD,0007,2E3C,0004,
D37B,7402,7600
150 DATA 387C,8600,4E75,019F,002F,
41FA,0008,3B48
160 DATA F220,4E75,41FA,0012,43F8,
0B24,7020,32D8
170 DATA 51C8,FFFC,4EF8,0800,6144,
4DF8,0C8E,612A
180 DATA 31FC,4A79,28EC,21FC,0478,
0028,2872,4E90
190 DATA 4A87,67D2,4DF8,0CFE,6110,
31FC,4A79,6D54
200 DATA 4278,6DF8,4278,6FDA,4ED0,
4EB8,0D0C,41F8
210 DATA 2000,303C,C350,4EF8,1440,
0018205D
```

IDIOT'S GUIDE

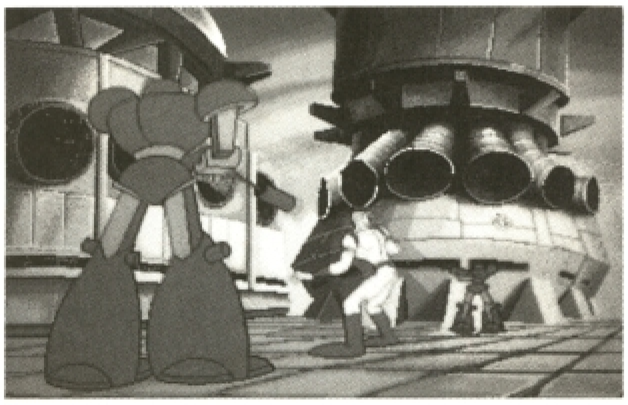
A Man's Gotta Do What A Man's Gotta Do (ST/Amiga) ... and if you gotta use one of these routines, here's the lowdown:

1) Load Workbench, then Basic. 2) Type the listing in EXACTLY as shown. 3) Insert a blank disk and SAVE the program for future use. 4) Remove the blank disk and insert the original game disk. If you get requesters saying your disk is up the spout, ignore them. It's simply because they're non-DOS format and can't be read except by the protection system. 5) RUN the program and the game will load with infy Rainbow pyjamas (or whatever). If you are trying to use the POKES with a cracked copy of the game, don't bother because it won't work. Serves you right for being a pirate.

I'm being overwhelmed by the bottom of the page again, so it's nearly time to go. My thanks once again to Mark Lawrence from Basildon in Essex, perhaps the most prolific 16-bit hacker to date. You don't think so? Think you're better, eh? Well I'm afraid you'll just have to prove it by sending some blobs to Jon North, IYHL, ZERO, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE. Anything published wins a T-shirt or a game or something (it depends on what mood I'm in) but whatever it is it will be extremely trendy and ever so expensive to buy. Go ferrit! Thank you ladies and gentlemen, my name's Ben Elton, Goodnight!

GUTLESS GULLY

Struggling with a game your mates cracked aeons ago and generally feeling a bit of a bimbo? Well in that case you've found the right page so now go and read it somewhere secret and solitary like um... the toilet and if it doesn't sort out that little problem for you, then let's face it you *are* a bimbo.



KICK OFF

Jimbo M. writes in with a couple of penalty style tipettes. When taking a penalty against the computer, set your joystick to 'autofire', then wait until the ball is just past the goalie before shooting. This should guarantee a goal every time. In two player mode, when you are in the nets against a penalty, setting your joystick to 'autofire' before the penalty is taken should result in a save every time.

SPACE ACE

For all those who are by now totally hacked off 'cos their brothers, sisters, parents and family pets keep turning up with their mates saying 'Oooh, come and look at this game, it's iust like a cartoon... go on Billy, play that *Space Ace* one again.', this tip from **Omer Barak** of Israel, might help. Pause the game during play, and type 'DODEMODEXTER', and the game will play itself like a huge cartoon. You, meanwhile, can go and make a coffee until they all naff off again and you can get back to your computer.

HARD DRIVIN'

A 'sort of' tip from **Chris Greenwood.** Very 'sort of'. Whilst racing round the stunt track: "Aim at the bridge jump and time it so that you are at maximum speed when you take off. When you eventually land you, your car and anything coming towards you will disintegrate into about 500 zillion pieces." Er, great Chris. Don't call us...

CLOWNOMANIA

Press the HELP key at any time for extra jumps and razors. So says **A. Hawksby** of Merseyside.

BATTLE SQUADRON

Type in 'CASTOR' at any time during play, and the screen should flash green for a second or so. Once the game starts properly again, both of your ships will be invulnerable.

BEACH VOLLEY

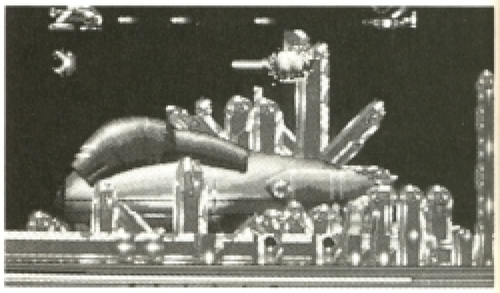
On one player, guide your man to the bottom right of the screen. When your partner passes the ball to you, slam it straight ahead of you. The computer's returns invariably end up off the court, and it should be fairly easy to win with this one little glitch. Thanks go to **Simon Jones** of Merseyside for that one.

NEW ZEALAND STORY

A quick guide to Level one warps from **Sean Miller** of Surrey. Level 1.1: At the end of this level there are three platforms. Stand on the highest and shoot left whilst jumping. A warp will appear. 1.2: Jump up two levels at the beginning and fire left for another warp. 1.3: Get a balloon, go up and right, then down, keeping next to the left hand wall. About two inches from the floor fire. 1.4: Go through the water and up until you reach a platform with two letters on it. Walk left whilst firing for yet another warp.

X-OUT

A picotip for level one from **M.J. Taylor** of Darwen in Lancashire. Give your ship the most powerful laser and on reaching the meanie at the end of level one, pull it back to the mid left of the screen, set the joystick on autofire and leave 'em to it.



KELLY'S HEROES



Kelly's Heroes returns for a second thrilling instalment. Have letters been flooding in? Have the ZERO posties been complaining about all the extra mail? Er... no, actually.

What ho mateys. The second Kelly's Heroes already and no one's written to me yet. That's because at the time of writing, the first one hasn't hit the streets yet, but hopefully I should have some genuine mail next time round. In the meantime, we managed to remove a few letters from Binky's carcass, which at the time was still tangled up on the barbed wire at the Swiss border. Tsk. The things people leave lying around.

The first letter is from **P. Minola** of Wakefield, who wants some help on *Gauntlet II*, namely 'how do you find the secret rooms?' I didn't know there were any myself, but fortunately the bods at US Gold were on hand to help. Once you have cleared a dungeon, they sez, retrace your steps collecting all the super shots as you do. Don't use your fire button and when you then go to the exit you will end up in the secret rooms. Simple eh?

Lee Harper was one of the fortunate many who got an ST last Christmas, along with the Power Pack. Unfortunately, he's not doing too well with *Predator*, so he turned to Binky (R.I.P.) for help. Luckily for Lee, we know a bit about this game. Hitting the F10 key whilst playing should give you a full energy ratio which could make things a little easier – yep, it's as simple as that.

Nebulus, that absolutely stunning game from John Phillips, has recently been given a new lease of life in a PC version. No cheat for that one I'm afraid but for those of you stuck in the ST or Amiga versions, typing 'HELLOIAMJMP' should give you infinite lives.

Finally, a plea for help. **D.C. Moore** wants help on the Amiga version of *H.A.T.E.*, the Gremlin game we reviewed yonks back, and also *Xenon*. If anyone out there knows of a cheat, a playing tip or even a POKE for these, drop Kelly's Heroes a line. Likewise, if you're stuck in a dungeon with no sign of an exit, keep getting killed by the alien on level 52 or simply want to see the final screen of a game, put pen to paper and we'll get 'Ver Lads' to straighten it out. Pip Pip.

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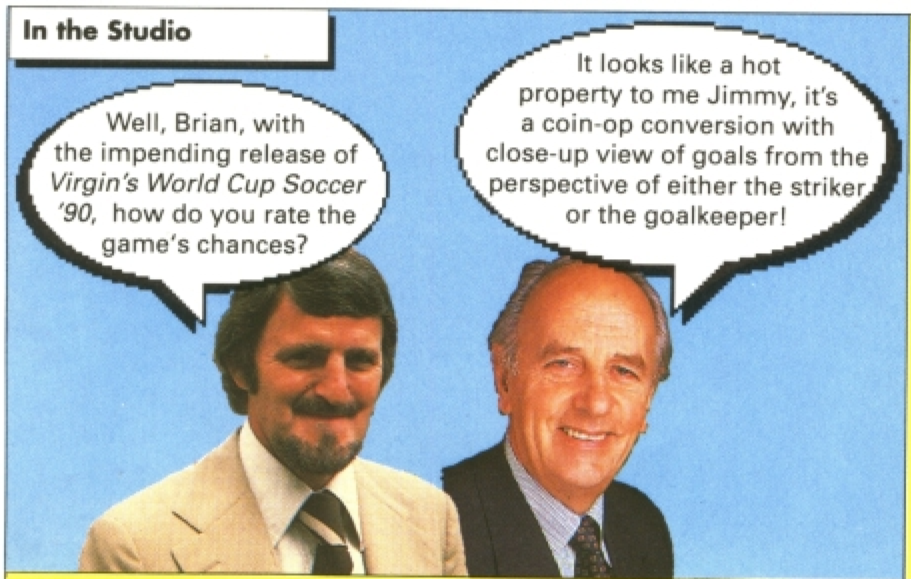


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COMPO

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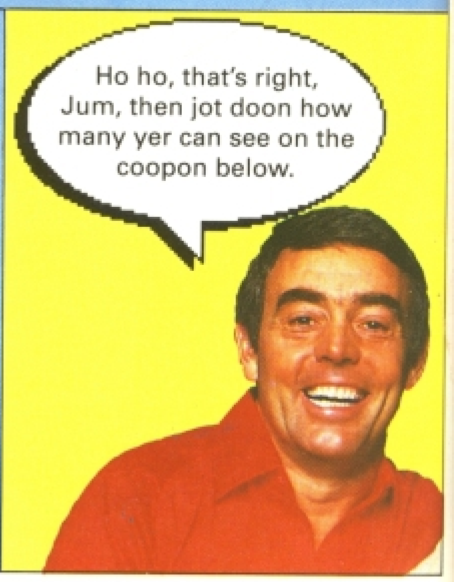
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10 second prize winners will be 'passed' an FA approved leather football and 50 runners-up will receive a copy of the brilliant *World Cup Soccer '90* game itself!! And now back to the studio to find out what to do from Saint and Greavsie.

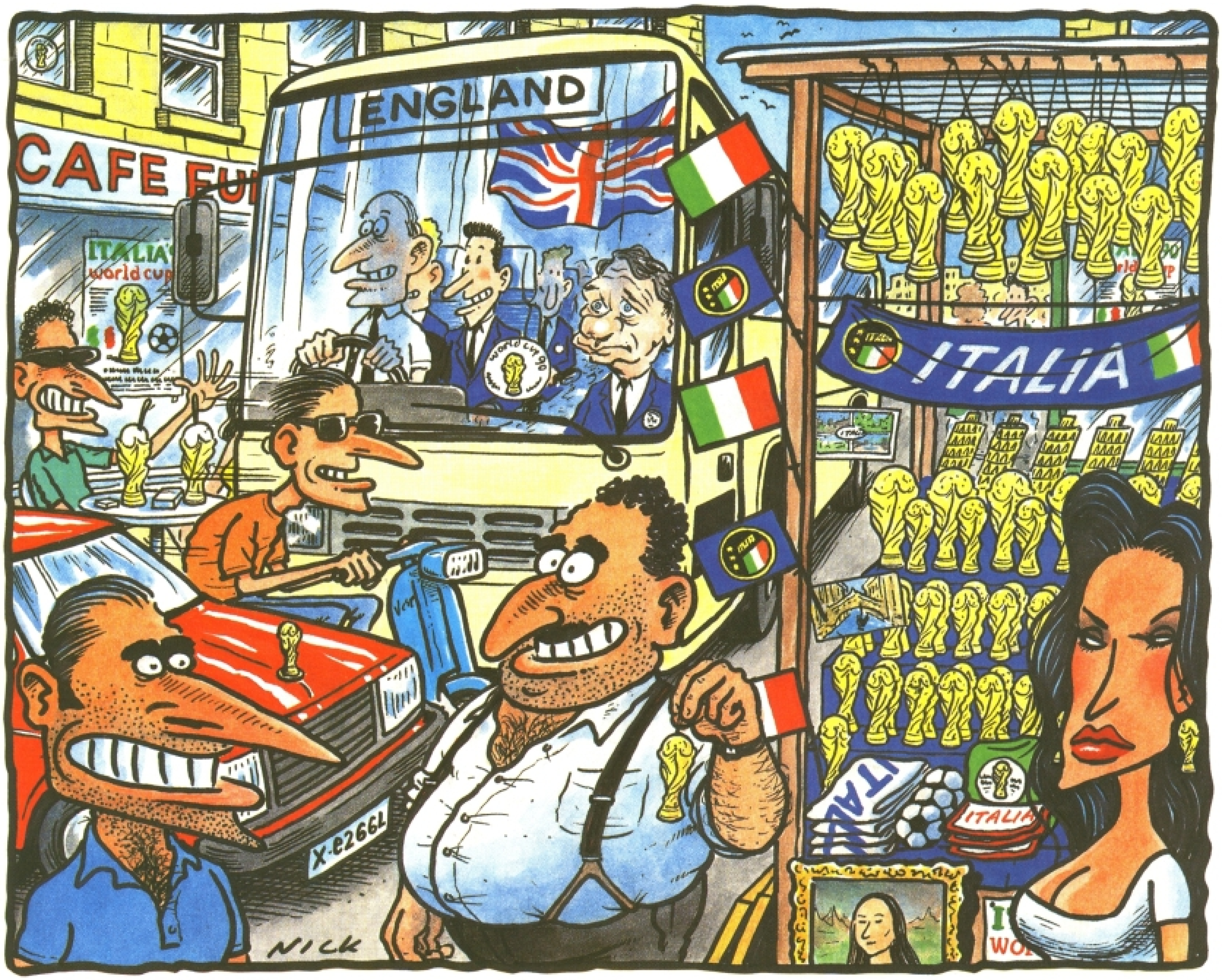
The 'What You Have To Do' Soccer Round-up

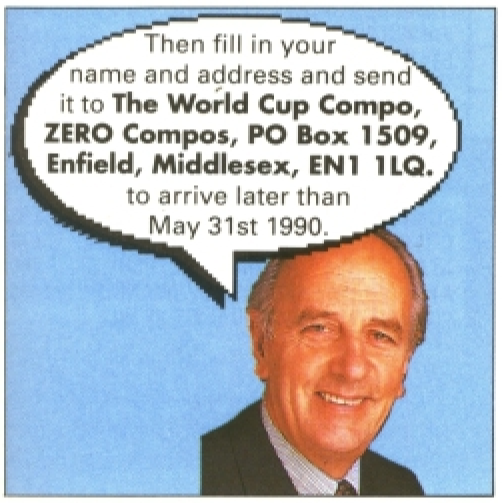




CUP COMPO!!









(Reader's voice) I think there are ______ World Cups in the picture Mr MacMenemie.

Name ______

Address ______

______

Post Code ______

I own **ST** ☐ **Amiga** ☐ **PC** ☐

Rules

- Only readers aged 6-18 are eligible for the first prize. Second and third prizes are available to all. *World cup soccer '90* is available on ST and Amiga only.
- Any members of the Virgin Mastertronic or ZERO teams found entering this compo will be transferred to Siberia.
- Entries received after May 31st 1990 will be relegated to the bin.
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SHORTS

Tim Ponting frequently tells porkie-pies about being 'a prominent member of Mensa'. Strapping him into a chair with three new 'puzzle games' seemed like a good way of bringing him down a peg or three...

E-MOTION

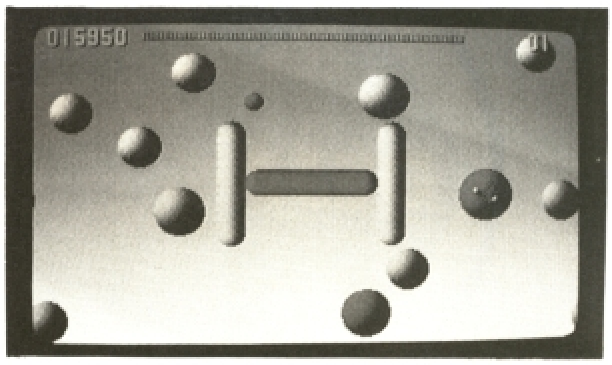
US Gold/ST £19.99/Amiga & PC £24.99/Out Now

AMIGA

E-Motion is all about population control. The idea is to bang away like an armed policeman without creating babies. Or something like that.

You control an, erm... thingy with an arrow on top showing the direction in which you're facing. Knocking balls of the same colour together causes them to disappear. If, by some careless accident, two orbs of different colours collide, baby balls are produced. Being a good cannibal you eat them, because if you don't they grow into big balls themselves of yet another colour.

Darwinism has never been so annoying. The idea is to get rid of all the balls before they explode and it ain't easy, mainly because your thingy is



awfully difficult to control.

E-Motion is a game you'll either love or hate. It requires a good deal more joystick juggling than most puzzle games, which will almost certainly make it or break it depending on your point of view. But no matter how fast your reflexes, a dumb move can spell disaster as the population on screen takes off like rabbits on an 18-30 holiday. A complete load of balls. In the best possible taste.

GRAPHICS 82	ADDICTIVENESS 81	OVERALL
SOUND 84	EXECUTION 83	82

ATOMIX

Thalion (Grandslam)/Amiga, ST & PC £19.99/Out Now

AMIGA

Apparently endorsed by Albert Einstein himself (his famous straggly hairy bits appear on the title screen), *Atomix* is rather like Lego for the nuclear physicist. You're presented with a maze around which atoms are scattered and you have to build the molecule shown at the corner of the screen within a certain time limit by moving them horizontally or vertically.

Things are hampered by the fact that when you move an atom, it continues until it hits an obstacle. This makes fine positioning a bit of a nightmare. It requires the same sort of mind as those little tile games where you were supposed to form the words GOAT, RULE, DIET, and CAB within a square frame by sliding the bits around. It's intriguing at first but a bit repetitive until you get the passwords to skip to the real humdingers from level ten onwards.



GRAPHICS 79	ADDICTIVENESS 78	OVERALL
SOUND 72	EXECUTION 71	75

KLAX

Domark/ST & Amiga £19.99/PC £24.99/Out Now

ST

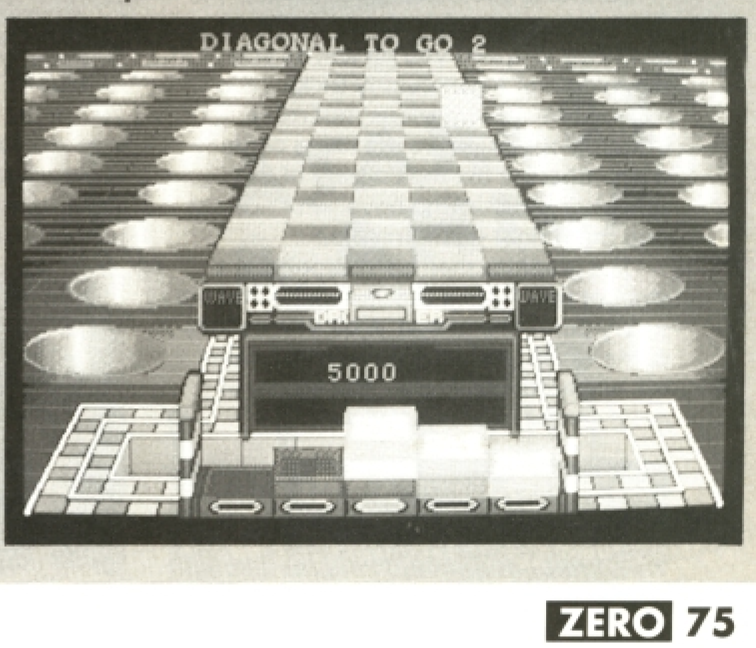
ZERO HERO

This knee-tremblingly addictive *Tetris*-with-knobs-on 16-bit conversion comes hard on the heels of its arcade release: somebody somewhere obviously thinks it's a licence to print money. And they're not far wrong. *Klax* is one of those 'only one more go, honest' type of games, with depth and subtlety that grows with every return to the keyboard.

The rules are dead simple. Coloured bricks roll one by one down a table towards your paddle at the bottom. You have to collect the bricks and pile them up below the paddle in such a way that they form vertical, horizontal or diagonal lines of the same colour – at which point a 'Klax' is made and they vanish. Each level has a target for its completion – either a points total or a number of specific types of 'Klax' to make. Up to five bricks may be held on the paddle at the same time, allowing you some control over the order in which you dump them. You can also use the paddle to knock a brick back temporarily to pick up another brick first. Once all five piles reach five high, you're stuffed.

After a few plays, you begin to realise the depth of strategies available to you as patterns begin to etch themselves indelibly into the grey matter. Create one 'Klax' and if you're smart, it'll trigger off another as the bricks disappear. There's only one drawback: the graphics aren't particularly well defined, so colours can be easily confused and the paddle position misread at vital moments. But that minor quibble aside, *Klax* is a real hooker.

GRAPHICS 71	ADDICTIVENESS 93	OVERALL
SOUND 73	EXECUTION 91	90



DÉJÀ VU

Allo allo! This is where ZERO puts on a beret and a string of clichés to take a look at old games on new formats. On y va ?

OPERATION THUNDERBOLT



Ocean/£19.99/Out Now

ST

Paul: I once met a man in a pub whose friend's younger sister knew a bloke who had never even heard of *Operation Thunderbolt*. This was a bit of a shock because I thought *eveybody* knew about *Operation Thunderbolt*. Perhaps he was Welsh.

For the benefit of the man in the pub's friend's sister's friend *Operation Thunderbolt* is a sequel to *Operation Wolf* and is all about killing people, especially if they're foreign.

The action takes place over seven levels of vertically and horizontally scrolling action. Scrolling is smooth and the opposing sprites are both well drawn and well animated. This version loses out to the Amiga somewhat in its sound which is a bit thin. Real enthusiasts will be disappointed to hear that the dogs and cats no longer yelp when shot.

What the ST version hasn't changed is the difficulty of the game. Taking on half the Libyan army with your last two bullets is never going to be easy especially when you've only a vague idea where the bullets are going. As the hoary old Arabian proverb goes: "Man who fails to get laser sights will not live to see the next series of *ALF*."

GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS	SOUND	EXECUTION	OVERALL
80	80	81	85	84

TOOBIN

Domark/£24.99/Out Now

PC

Paul: Some people say that *Toobin* was a big hit in the Arcades, then again some people will say anything. If it was a hit I really don't understand why since it's neither interesting nor attractive.

Toobin is all about shooting rapids but instead of doing this in a canoe you're in a rubber ring which is about as controllable



as a Triumph 750 without handlebars. This is rather unfortunate as you have to paddle your way past obstacles ranging from vicious punks to hungry crocs with only a few old coke cans to protect yourself.

Control is obviously hampered by the flow of the tide which also has a nasty tendency to speed you up just as you're in the middle of a particularly tricky manoeuvre. Less obvious, but more irritating obstacles are the score cards which obscure the top corners of the screen. Good thinking boys, why not just slap them right in the middle?

The graphics themselves look like a straight port from a Sinclair game and not a very good one at that. A bit of a novelty game which, once the novelty has worn off, will probably sink to the bottom of most games piles.*(Ouch.Ed.)*

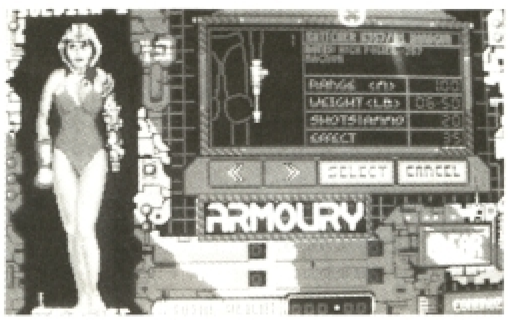
GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS	SOUND	EXECUTION	OVERALL
65	65	60	64	65

SOLDIER 2000

Artronic/£19.99/Out Now

AMIGA

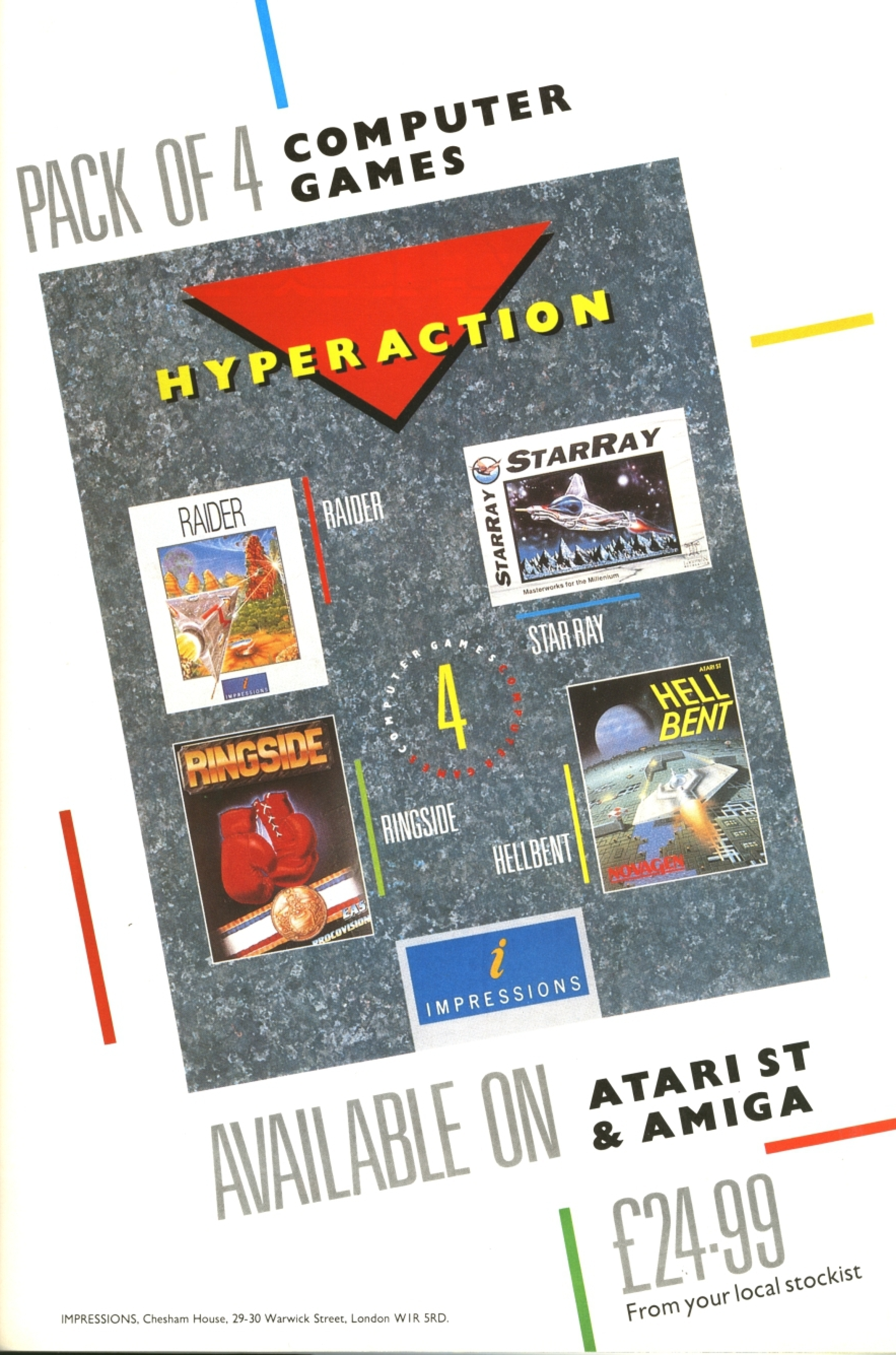
Paul: *Soldier 2000* is a shoot 'em up not a million miles removed from *Operation Thunderbolt*. Hostages have to be rescued and you're the only man, or in this case woman, for the job. After visiting the armoury to select weapons and armour (paying careful attention to weight) you gird your loins and go into action.



Action takes place in rooms and corridors. The corridors are safer but not exactly littered with hostages. The rooms, which are viewed in first person perspective, are full of hostages but have more terrorists than you can count on the bullets of one magazine. To add to your problems the lights keep going out (that's privatised electricity for you) which is where your infa-red sights come in... or would, if they ever bloody well worked.

Soldier 2000 is a tough shoot 'em up in both senses of the word. It's very difficult to complete and if you shoot anyone they collapse into a heap of bloody rags. It's not particularly original but as far as it goes it's pretty good.

GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS	SOUND	EXECUTION	OVERALL
82	85	80	84	85



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OVERALL
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CONSOLE ACTION

INSIDE

There really is an Amstrad console

Sega RC Grand Prix and Slap Shoot

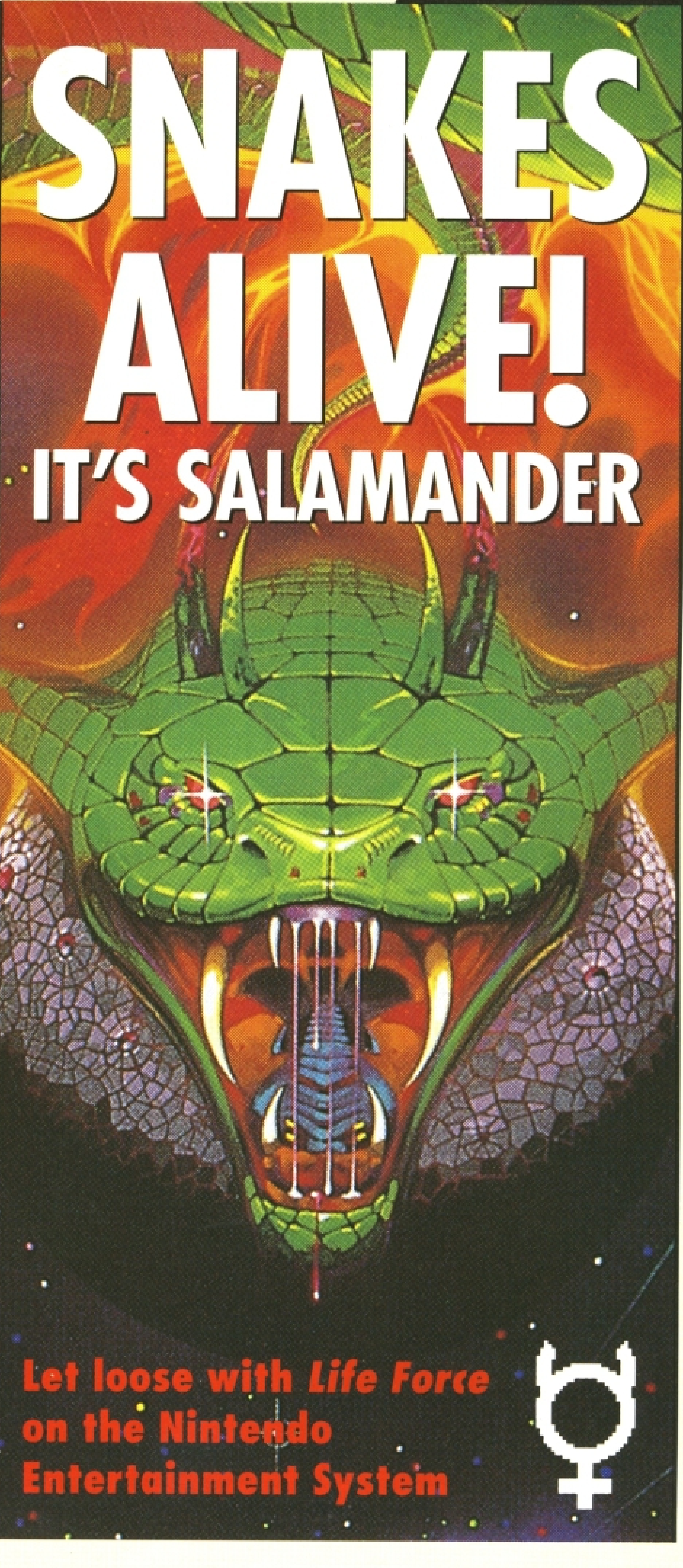
Pipe Mania for Gameboy and Nintendo

Fire & Forget II storms onto the Sega

Megadrive version of Dragon's Lair

Games coming soon for the Super Grafx

Plus news, reviews, tips and cheats



SNAKES ALIVE!

IT'S SALAMANDER

Let loose with *Life Force* on the Nintendo Entertainment System

ATARI LYNX
ATARI VCS
KONIX
NINTENDO ES
NINTENDO GAME BOY
PC ENGINE
SEGA MS
SEGA MEGA DRIVE
SUPER GRAFX

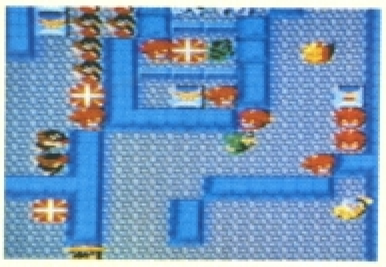
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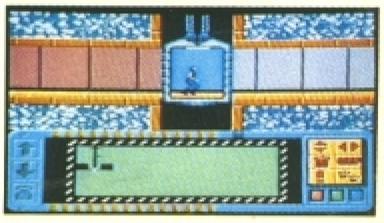


TATSUJIN

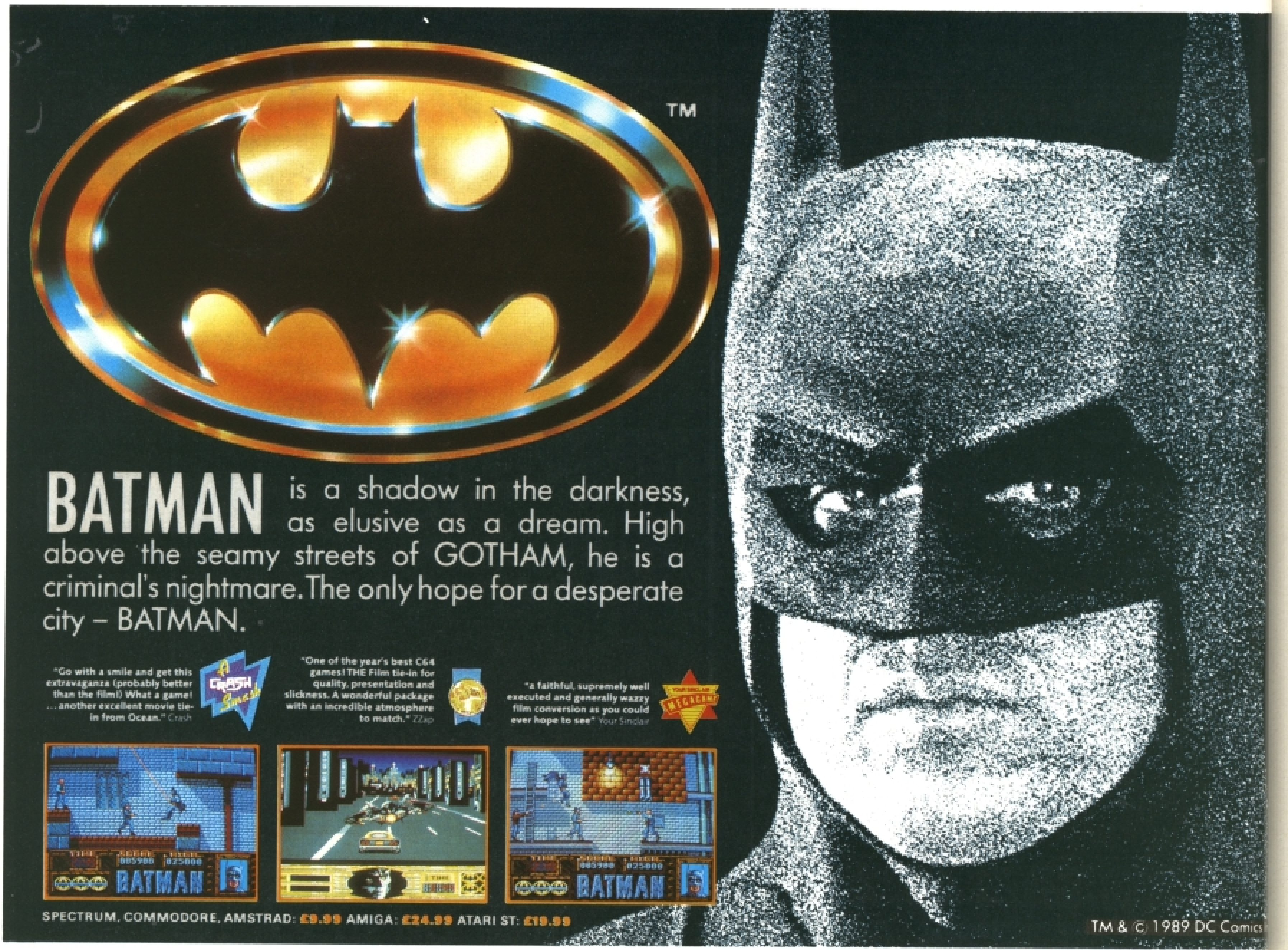
Coin-op quality shoot 'em up on the Megadrive.

SPECIAL





See how US Gold's *Gauntlet* and *Impossible Mission* are shaping up on the Sega.





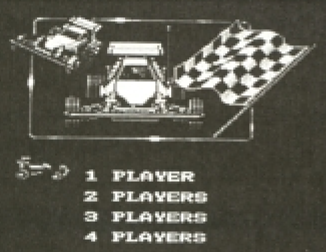
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QUICKIES

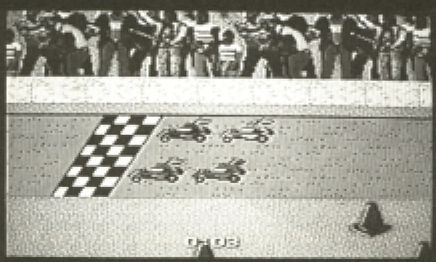
You've seen *Dragon's Lair* on the Amiga and ST... well Readysoft in the States are this minute working hard to get a Sega Mega Drive version of the classic laser disk game ready for this Christmas. Yeow! That will certainly be worth looking forward to.

Empire is working on versions of *Pipe Mania* for the Nintendo Entertainment System and Game Boy. A coin-op conversion is also being produced.

You'll soon be able to rent Sega games from RCA/Columbia video outlets around the country.



RC Grand Prix



Slap Shoot
These two new titles are destined for the UK. Hurrah!

Coming up soon for the Sega are *RC Grand Prix* and *Slap Shoot*. *RC Grand Prix* is a car racing game for up to four people. Play doesn't take place simultaneously, instead each player must race on his own. *Slap Shoot* is, of course, an ice hockey simulation. Keep your eyes peeled for this one; player control is good and close-up replays of goal scoring are graphically excellent.

ANOTHER ONE IN THE HAND

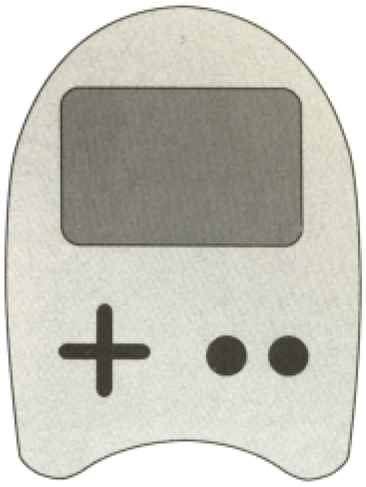
No sooner has all the fuss died down concerning NEC's proposed palm-top PC Engine than Sega decides to stir things up again. The company has just announced that it too is to launch a hand-held console.

A colour hand-held Sega based on existing Master System technology is expected to be announced – if not launched – at a Japanese technology trade fair this week.

The console will be able to run existing Sega games on smart card format – ironic really, as a few months ago Sega wanted to phase out the credit card-sized games due to the flimsy nature of the format. This bodes well for the machine's future as it already has a huge software base to start from. As Atari are discovering, it's all very well having a high-tech piece of hand-held kit but if the software's not there, you're not going to get many supporters.

Although no price or release date has been confirmed for the Sega machine, industry pundits reckon that the price will fall somewhere between the Game Boy and Atari Lynx.

With all the hand-held consoles that have been released or announced of late, you're going to need a very large palm to carry them all.



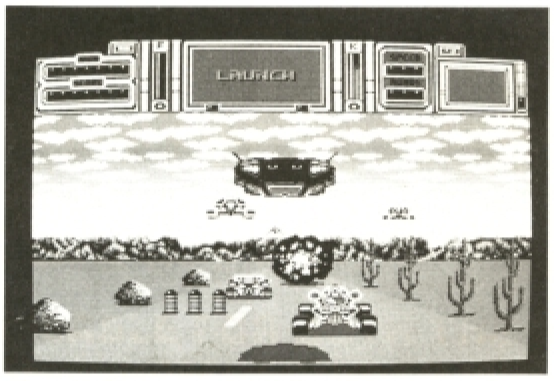
Artists impression of the Sega hand-held due for imminent release in Japan.

INTO THE FIRE

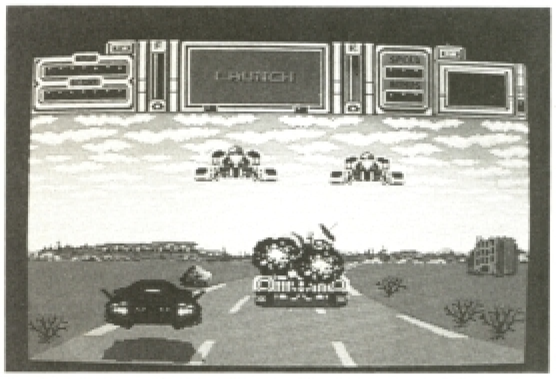
Yes, these pictures really are from a forthcoming Master System game called *Fire And Forget II*. French software house Titus has been given the go-ahead by Sega to release three Sega games during the next year. *Fire And Forget II* is the first.

FF II is a racing game in which the objective is to destroy anything lying in your path. The graphics are absolutely astounding and the speed at which things move is also impressive. According to Titus' boss, Eric Caen, the Japanese thought *FFII* was technically the most brilliant game they had seen.

But who cares about technicalities ? If it plays as well as it looks, you're in for a treat and what's more, it's out soon.



***Fire and Forget II* on the Sega Master System. Cars, colours and cacti – what more could you want?**



You've just wasted an armoured patrol car but how are you going to get the two vehicles flying overhead?

HALF A CPC

Some months ago Amstrad reduced all the components inside the Amstrad CPC computer to fit on half the original circuit board. Cost cutting? Far from it; the original expense incurred in getting it to the compact size would have been phenomenal.

Although the reasons for reducing the machine's circuit board weren't appreciated at the time, it all becomes clear now that Amstrad are set to launch a console based on CPC technology. A console the size of a CPC would be ridiculous!

Software houses both sides of the Channel have confirmed that there is to be an Amstrad console as software development has already started taking place. Unfortunately Amstrad have issued all manner of non-disclosure agreements to software houses, making it impossible for them to reveal the juicy details.

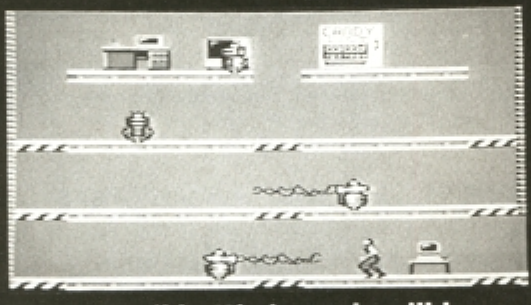
However, what can be gleaned is that the machine will run existing CPC software. The games will, of course, have to be converted to cartridge format before they can be used. The Amstrad console will have an enhanced palette and will be able to access more memory than the existing CPC range.

STAY A WHILE...

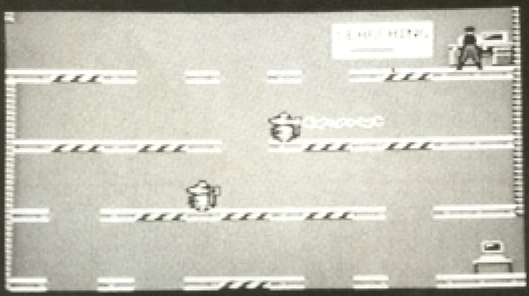
Two absolutely stunning Sega games are currently being developed by Birmingham-based US Gold. *Richard Monteiro* went to investigate and stayed forever.

If you played it on a Commodore 64 you will never forget the game's opening phrase: 'Stay a while... stay forever!' If you've got a Sega you'll soon be hearing the very same words. Yes, US Gold are in the thick of producing *Impossible Mission.* But that's not all – the monster arcade hit *Gauntlet* is also being converted to the Sega.

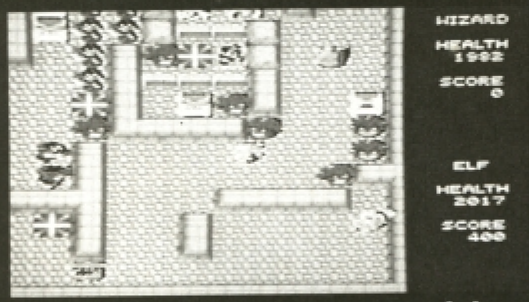
Gary Priest, former Gremlin programmer and creator of games such as *Basil The Great Mouse Detective, Hot Shots, Technocop* and *Footballer Of The Year II*, is doing *Impossible Mission.*



***The Impossible Mission* code will be about 16K in length, the graphics a further 60 or 70K and the sampled sound another 20K. Sega cartridges can hold 128K of information.**



Like the C64 version, you've got a limited time to search for pieces of puzzle and put them in the correct order in the Sega version of *Impossible Mission.*



***Impossible Mission* sports some of the finest graphics you're likely to see on the Sega.**

"I've had the C64 version alongside me and am trying to get the Sega version to be as similar to it as possible," admitted Gary. "Most of the graphics and animation have been ported across from the C64 to the Sega. I don't want to change the game too much as the original was liked by everyone. Of course, the graphics have been touched up, there's more colour and the gameplay has also been improved. But apart from that little is different. I'll even get the same digitised speech in the game."

The game is due for release in three or four months time; Gary has been working on it for four and a half months. It already looks very impressive. The main character is beautifully animated and control is exceptionally smooth.

Even the ST version's scroll looks sick against the Sega's.

"It's a great feeling writing a game for a machine that no one outside Japan has used before," enthused Gary. "Programming the machine isn't too bad. But it's impossible to access screen memory directly; it's like programming through a keyhole which can be time consuming. The Sega has got hardware sprites and 32 colours can be used from two palettes, so it's possible to have ST-like graphics on the machine albeit in a slightly lower resolution."

Gauntlet, currently being programmed by Tony Porter, looks equally impressive. Even when the action gets hectic and there are screenfuls of ghosts or other characters, there is no flicker or slowdown. The game is going to be a huge hit. It's a more accurate conversion than any of the other 8-bit versions. Even the ST version's scroll looks sick against the Sega's.



Why do many Sega games suffer so badly from flicker when there are several sprites on the screen? According to Gary it's due to poor programming techniques: "It's only possible to have eight sprites on a line which can be eight pixels wide (so essentially you can only have 64 pixels worth of sprites on a line). Rather than cutting down the game, programmers will make the game as similar to other versions as possible regardless of how it finally looks or plays. Plotting another sprite after the eighth will make the first one disappear. As sprites are plotted and unplotted on screen quickly, there aren't long gaps between a sprite disappearing and reappearing. However, it's notice-able enough to get the flicker effect." *Gauntlet* gets round flicker by using character graphics rather than sprites.

The often dubious quality of some of the Sega games is down to the strange programming habits of the Japanese. Generally there are around six people working on a game for a year. It's the way developers recruit programmers that is bizarre; they put an ad in the local rag asking for anyone interested in computing to contact them. The developers then train the new recruits and get them to join a team of novices to start work on a game. Established programmers aren't even considered.

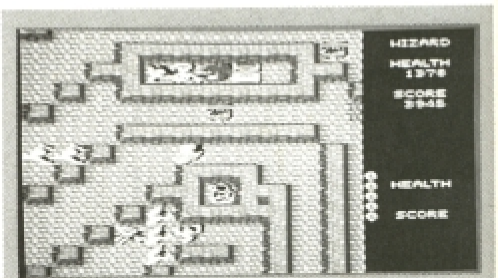


From left to right are Gary 'ordained' Priest, Tony Potter and Bob 'suit of' Armour. Gary is writing the Sega version of *Impossible Mission* while Tony and Bob are working on *Gauntlet* for the Sega and Atari 7800 respectively.

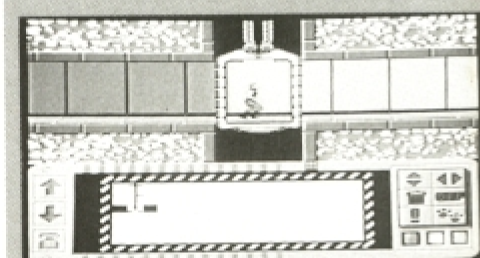
Development takes place on an ordinary PC running a Z80 assembler. Z80 Probe – which takes the place of a Z80 chip – plugs into the Sega's Z80 socket and gives the coder complete and constant control over the chip. A RAM cartridge is used for storing the game rather than a ROM card. Downloading code to the cartridge is fine but not as fast as PDS. There's nothing flash about the kit; it's functional and easy to use.

Astonishingly US Gold are working on Atari 7800 games. Bob Armour has already produced one, *Tower Toppler,* and is currently working *Gauntlet.* Although *Tower Toppler* hasn't appeared in the UK – presumably due to the fact that the 7800 hasn't been marketed particularly well here. There are around two million consoles in the States.

The 7800 development kit comprises the following: a Mega ST running Atari's proprietary combination 6502/68000 assembler, lead from ST to 7800 RAM cartridge and downloading software.



***Gauntlet* on the Sega. A great coin-op conversion featuring one or simultaneous two player action, over 100 levels and digitised sound.**



No matter what's on the screen in *Gauntlet*, the characters don't flicker and the game doesn't slow down.

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CONSOLE CLASSIC

"Holy slithering sensations, Batman. Just wriggle over here and take a look at this. I think we're done for."

"You're right, Robin, but tell me, what on earth are we doing here?"

"Well, it's going to be a long time before we appear in a console game so I thought I'd make the most of it now."

(That's it you two! Hop it! Ed.)

"Do you know, Boy Wonder the trouble with some people..."

(Go! Ed.)

You'll know it better as *Salamander.* Well you would if you'd played it in the arcades. Like many coin-op conversions for the Nintendo that appear in the UK, the original arcade name has been distorted for some reason. *Ghosts 'N' Goblins*, for instance, appeared as *Ghost 'N Goblins* on the Nintendo. And, yes, there is no apostrophe after the 'n'. Generally the name changes are subtle and it's not too hard to work out what the original game was called. But the distortion from *Salamander* to *Life Force* is quite something. Nuff said!

"Holy Tedium! Doesn't he go on, Batman. Very boring..."

(Get the batwing out of here! Ed.)

Life Force is a one or two player simultaneous shoot 'em up. There are six levels; odd-numbered levels are horizontally scrolling while even-numbered levels are vertically scrolling.

Get this – the whole reason you're shootin' up the place is because some planet-eating alien called Zelos is chomping away at the galaxy. Trouble is, the alien took one bite too many and now you're inside him. The only way you're going to get out is by soaring (sawing – geddit!) through his guts, hammering his hormones, blasting his ba... *(yes, we've got the idea. Ed.).* Stop



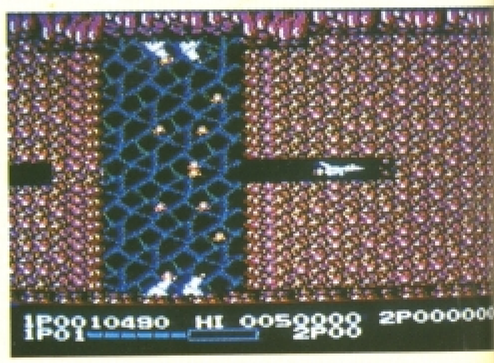
You've got to watch your goolies as those groping hands get everywhere. Looks like you're in for a fondle 'cos the reproducing brick has cut off the path ahead.



Oh, man! Looks like some oversized alien is trying to eat you for breakfast. Or is it after the chicken legs rapidly approaching?



You're entangled in a spaghetti jungle. The only thing to do is eat your way out. Yum,and those must be the meatballs up ahead.



You've made it to level 2. Things move vertically rather than horizontally. Bumping into those rocks will destroy you. Picking up the star-shaped objects ahead will give you extra weapons.

THE PICK OF THE POWER-UP PODS

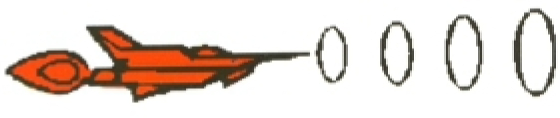
Blasting certain enemy craft will result in power pods being left behind. You can capture the pods to increase your power-up potential from speed up to force field.



SPEED UP
Allows you to manoeuvre more quickly. Can be vital for dodging end-of-level guardians.



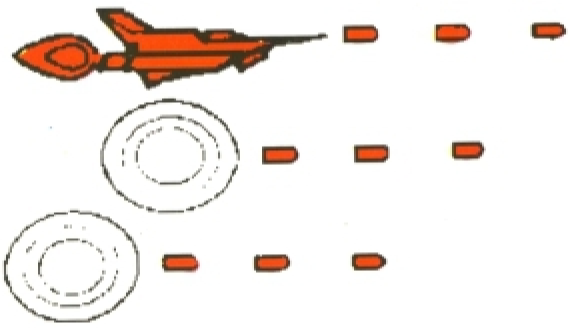
MISSILES
Enables you to fire twin Destructo rockets. Aliens glued to the sides of a level are soon destroyed with these.



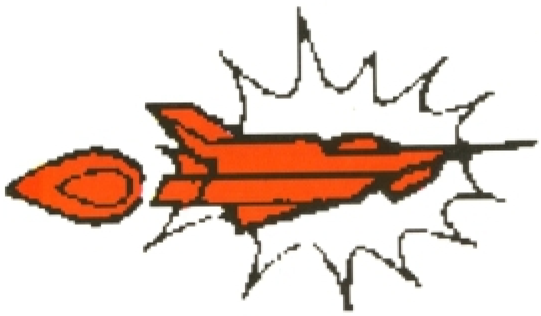
RIPPLE LASER
Starts from a small points and moves out like ripples in a pond. Useful for attacking enemies at long distances.



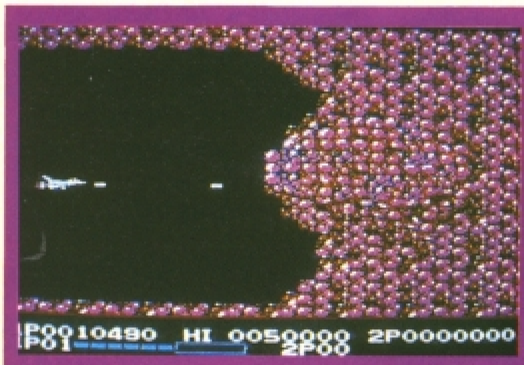
PLUTONIC LASER
This provides you with serious destructive capabilities. The best weapon to have.



OPTION
Me thinks this got translated incorrectly somewhere along the line. What's an Option? The word is meaningless in this context. What you get is up to two outriders. Both of which fire cannon shots.



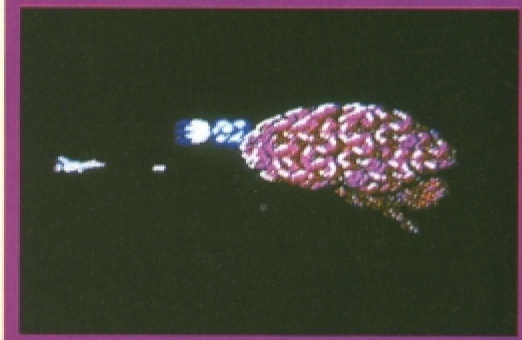
FORCE FIELD
Protective shield which will prevent aliens and bullets from harming you. It's good, but don't rely too heavily on it.



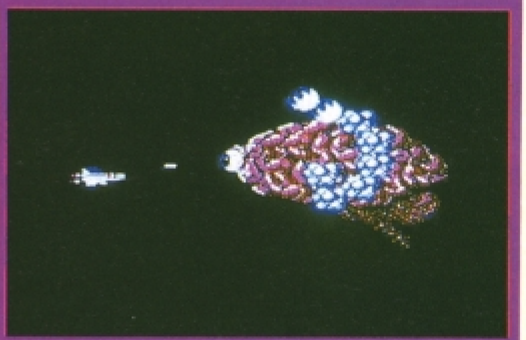
1 Hah! This is pathetic; just some brick to shoot through and not a single alien around. Easy!



2 Eh, why have we stopped? And, and... look, all my ex's are coming out of the brickwork.



3 This definitely looks bad for your health. It's grotesque. Are you sure I went out with that thing?



4 Har, har, it's ol' one-eye. Blind Tim, blind Tim quick. Burn his eye out. Har, har, that'll stop Tim.

interrupting Ed, I was only going to say blasting his baseball hat! Erm, and you win by blowing the alien's heart out. Easy. (well maybe not!)

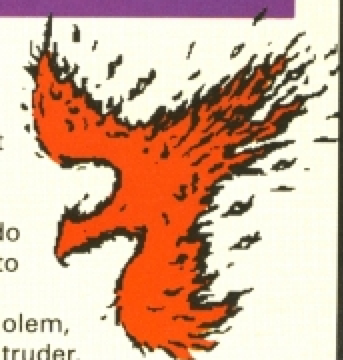
You fly around the alien's intestines in a Vic Viper – a very expensive piece of kit capable of doing some serious damage to anyone's insides. Your partner flies in a RoadBritish destroyer. RoadBritish? What a daft name.

The aliens that attack at the beginning of each stage are easily disposed of. They only serve as cannon fodder and leave power-up pods behind when shot. Capturing the pods will allow you to increase your power-up potential. The more pods you have, the bigger the size of your gun. For instance, one pod will give you a speed up, two pods will let you have missiles, three will give you ripple lasers and so on (see the box for further details).

No zone is the same. The graphics and aliens are vastly different from one stage to another. The only thing that remains consistent is your space craft and the extra weapons you can pick up. Stage 1 has you flying through the Phenom Galaxy (amazing what Zelos manages to cram into his stomach) avoiding Belbeims (nasty spikes which jut from the floor and ceiling), Death Hands (gropers that'll crush your privates), Sharpcrossers and Octas.

As you progress through the levels you'll meet Ugs, Balganis, Gremlins, Phoenixes, Prowlers, Fire Spheres, Spit Balls, Tabuli, Jellups, Bamudas, Lashes, Crash Bams (someone's running short of ideas), Glopters, Amkarkhand Heads and Iron Maidens.

At the end of each level you'll meet the customary guardian who must be defeated before access to the next level is permitted. The end-of-level aliens are



huge and very smoothly animated. It's not a good idea to admire them though, as they do serious damage to your well-being. After defeating Golem, Cruiser Tetron, Intruder, Tutankhamanattack (!) and Giga, you get to battle Zelos' heart and soul.

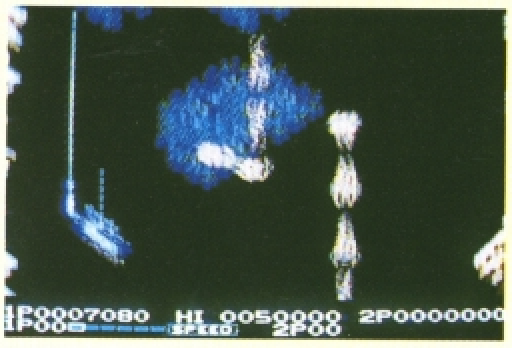
Ok, so it's a little late coming.

"Waddaya mean? Robin and I have been here throughout the ordeal!"

(Cripes! I thought I told you two to batmobile off! Ed.)

Who cares if *Life Force* has taken so long to arrive? It is spectacular; it ranks amongst the elite of Nintendo games. And wouldn't look out of place on a pedestal next to *Super Mario Bros. (So you liked it? Ed.)* The graphics and gameplay are excellent.

THE VERDICT 91



Mana from heaven! Mana... that's a very big word. We know a song about that one, don't we Billy? Mana-mana, doo-doooo, do-doo-doo...

CHEAT!

Crumbs, it's the corner crammed with craftiness, charlatanism and collusion for your console carts.

AZTEC

Sega

On the title screen, before the scroll unravels, press the pad upwards five times. Press the pad to the right three times when the character throws the money at the others. Press the pad once to the left and once downwards when the characters all move to the left. A face will appear in the top right of the screen signifying that you can select the starting round.

TIGER HELI

Nintendo

Hold down buttons A and B before the title screen appear to find yourself transported back to the level you last died on.

SHINOBI

Sega

Press a diagonal and button 2 on the title screen to be awarded with a start-on-any-level feature.

CASTLEVANIA

Nintendo

Jump over the castle entrance at the end of the garden to collect a money bag. Likewise, hit the right side of the platform situated by the last black leopard for a money bag.

ENDURO RACER

Sega

Press Reset followed by up, down, left and right on joypad 1 while the title screen is being displayed. You will now be able to select the start round.

DRAGON SPIRIT

PC Engine

Push and hold Run and Select. Push up once, let go of Run and Select. Push down twice, right twice, hit button I and then button II. You should hear a ping sound. You now have two more continues from the stage you last died on. You also have three lives with each continue.

TRAP SHOOTING

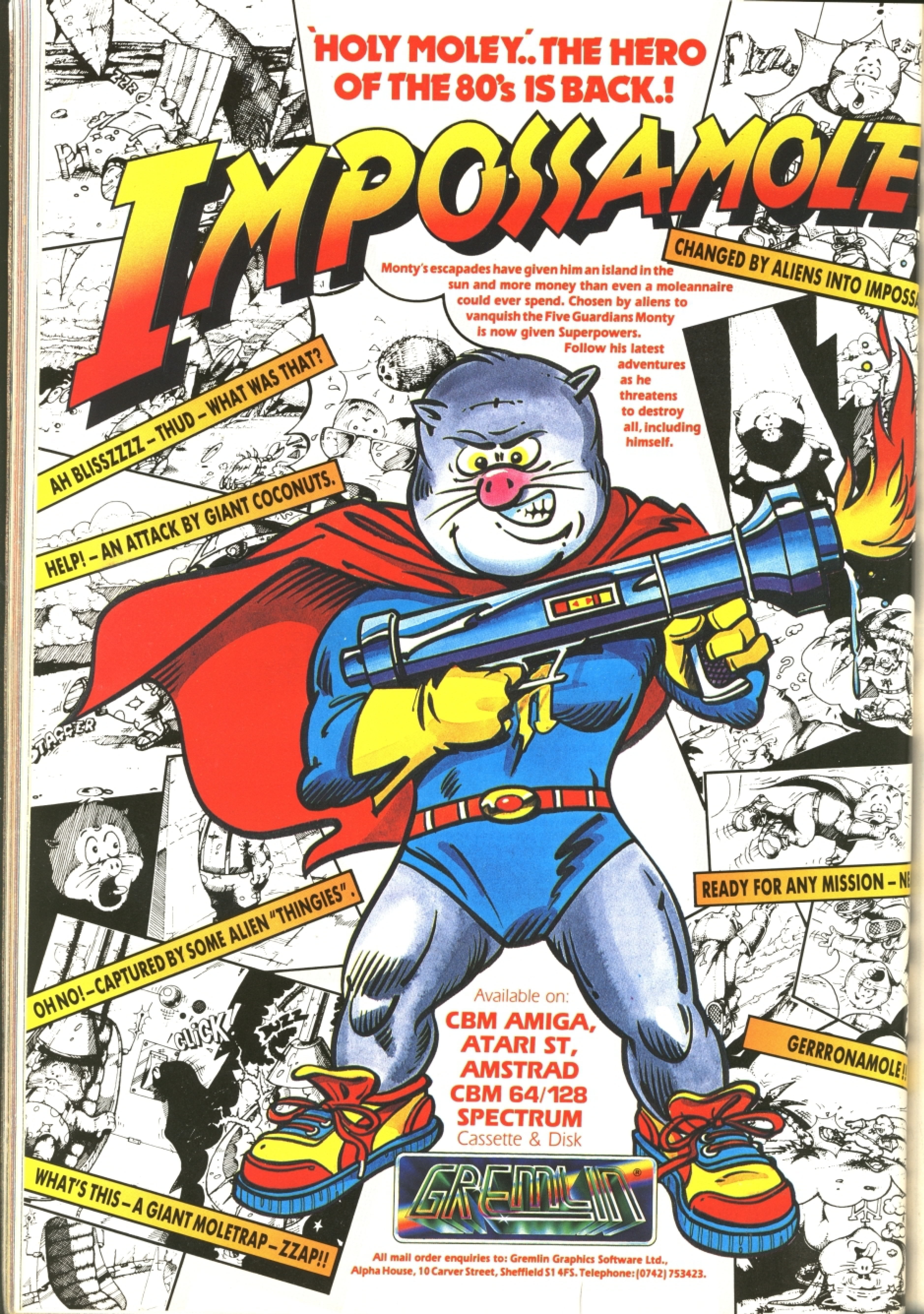
Sega

You need the light phaser for this to work. The indicator telling you how many traps are left will start flashing. On the fifth flash the first trap will be shot. You must fire immediately. This ensures you get at least one trap and 5000 points.
David Aitken, Glasgow.

It's good to have an unusual tip, David. For that you're getting an unusual game: *Psycho Fox.*

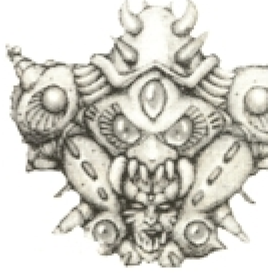
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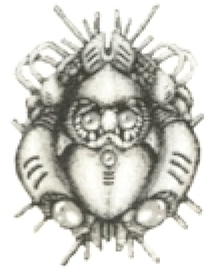
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TATSUJIN





Sega/$29.95/Sega Mega Drive



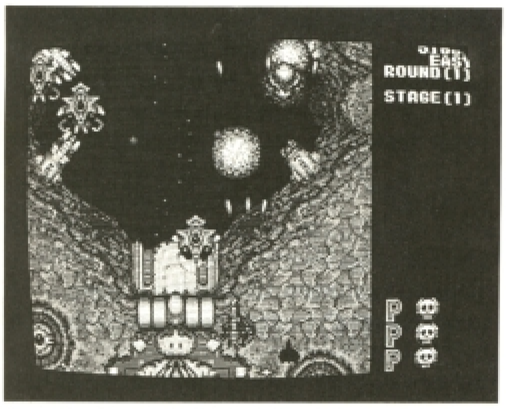
A game all about tangerines...? And pip-free jobbies at that. Mmmmmm. Whatever next? Your aim is to stop the Munchkins from depleting the Universe's stock of life-giving orange juice.

OK, so there aren't really any Munchkins in this game, but there are lots of oranges. Erm, well, actually there aren't any actual oranges or tangerines or clementines either. Sadly there aren't even any satsumas. In a game called *Tatsujin* you really would expect at least something about the Man from Del Monte. It's a disgrace, a wasted opportunity. I'm off. It's not worth reviewing a game that doesn't feature oranges...

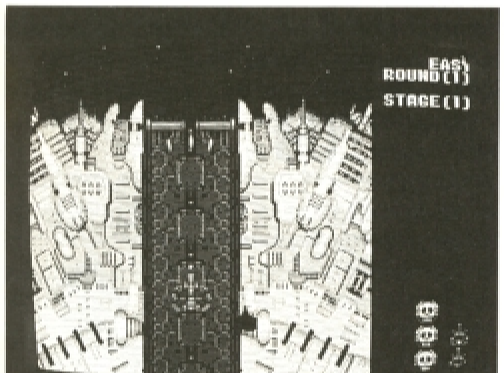
(Oh go on, we'll bring on the oranges at half-time. Ed.)

Well, *Tatsujin* is of course straight out of the arcades, so it's only likely to be one of three things: a beat 'em up, a racing game or a shoot 'em up. It is, in fact, a shoot 'em up. No surprises there.

The galaxy scrolls vertically past you and brings with it all manner of grotesque life forms. You being the friendly shoot-first-don't-bother-about-questions person that you are... erm, shoot first and don't bother asking questions. So, really, you don't know why you're blasting aliens. Sorry, I'm afraid I can't help you either 'cos the mission briefing is in Japanese.



So there are oranges in the game...



Hmmm, it's so nice and peaceful here - and the scenery's so beautiful - I think I'll take my holidays now.

You cruise around celestial bodies in a craft equipped with three-way cannon fire and three smart bombs. Shooting skull-like ships will result in a bonus of sorts being left. An 'S' symbol provides your ship with speed-up (it's very easy to collect too many of these making it difficult to control your craft), a 'B' gives you an extra smart bomb and a 'P' awards you with a power-up.

When shooting aliens, it's possible you'll be left with a red, blue or green gem. All change the type of weapon you use. A red gem will reward you with three-way cannon fire – obviously, if you already have this, there will be no change to your weapon. The blue gem provides you with a lethal bolt of blue heat-seeking laser energy. Finally, the green gem gives you a very powerful single-way cannon.

Back to the 'P's. Once you've collected five of them, your weapon becomes three times as powerful. If you had the laser, you'll now have three beams of energy rather than one. Similarly, if you had the three-way cannon fire, you'll suddenly get nine-way cannon fire. Yeah! Serious destructive power! But that's only half the story. Collecting a further five 'P's will expand your weapon system even further. Things get very silly if you manage to survive this long. Seriously, there is little room for anything else on the screen when you've got five writhing bolts of laser erupting from your ship. You have to work hard at dying when you've got that much fire power.

That's it! I'm not going any further until I've had my oranges. *(Oh do shut up. Here take these. Ed.)*

Mmmm...There are five levels to get through before you meet the mighty Dogurava. Finish him off and you finish your worries. Trouble is it's tough getting there. It's tough to know where one level ends and another begins because after defeating an end-of-level guardian, you get a few waves of smaller aliens. Presumably these are the hangers-on; the last of the pathetic resistance. The on-going onslaught is very enjoyable as there is absolutely no let up. No inter-level intermissions and no break in concentration.

Take a good game from the arcade and convert it to the Sega Mega Drive. Result: arcade machine in the home. Like so many coin-op conversions on the Mega Drive, *Tatsujin* is every bit as playable as the original. Even the graphics and sound are on a par with those of the arcade machine. Buy it!

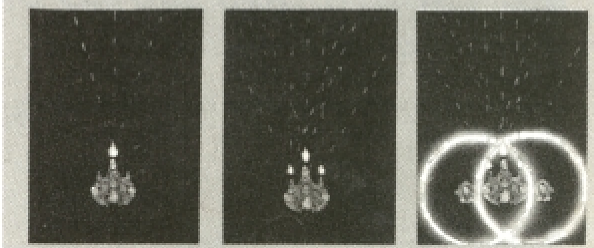
THE VERDICT 87

POWER SUPREME

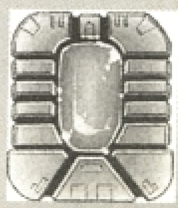
Collecting the right objects can boost your fire power beyond dreams.



RED GEM



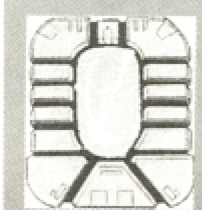
The red gem gives you three-way cannon, nine-way cannon or nine-way cannon plus dual shields depending on the number of power-ups you've collected.



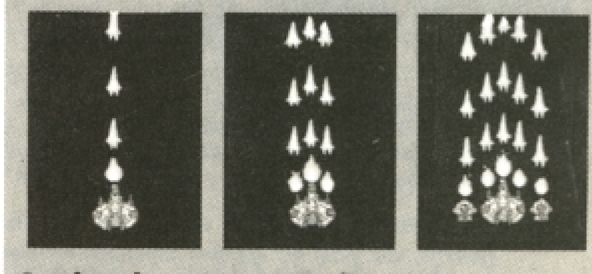
BLUE GEM



Bolts of writhing laser energy are to be had from the blue gem. Normal fire power is one laser, enhanced fire power is three bolts of laser while the ultimate in fire power is five lethal rays of energy.



GREEN GEM



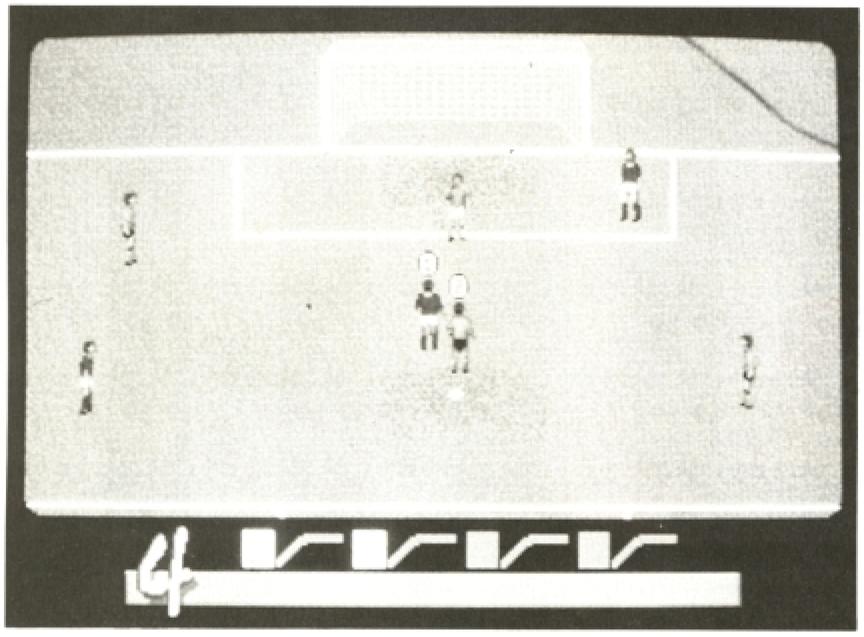
Getting the green gem give you concentrated cannon fire. Picking up enough 'P's gives you extra cannon fire. With the right amount of power-ups, three and five bolts of cannon fire can be acquired.



THE PRICE I$ RIGHT

Saving up for your poll tax bill and consequently considerably short of readdies!? Hmmm... Maybe you'd better skip the full pricers and peruse this month's budgets.

ITALIA '90
Codemasters/£4.99 Amiga /ST



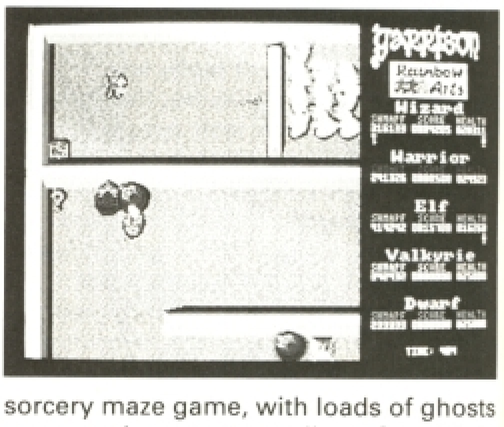
David: With the World Cup being played in Italy this Summer, it was a pretty safe bet to expect eight trillion footie games to appear on the market. Here's the Codies' offering, cunningly titled *Italia '90*. It's actually two games in one, for not only is there the usual arcade footie game where you play against the computer or a chum, or you and a chum both play the computer, but also a training game. This has an indoor part where you joystick waggle against the clock or a pal, performing sit-ups, press-ups etcetera, and an outdoor section where you can run the pitch, dribble around cones and practice penalties (both as keeper and taker). Okay so the matchplay may be a poor man's *Kick Off* and has a few graphic glitches, but with extra options, an additional game, and at a quarter of the price of the afore-mentioned classic, it's not bad at all.

OVERALL SCORE 85

GARRISON II
Highlights/£14.99 ST/Amiga

David: This game from German software house, Rainbow Arts, is the follow-up to their first *Garrison* game (also available on the Highlights budget label) Basically the two games are straight rip-offs of *Gauntlet I* or *II* (but a tad pricier).

For anyone not familiar with this classic formula, we're basically talking about an overhead viewpoint sword and

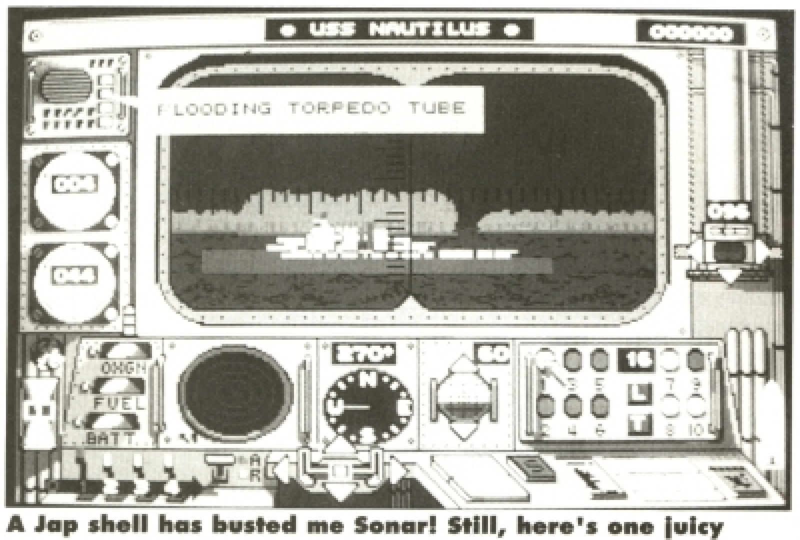


sorcery maze game, with loads of ghosts to zap and treasure to collect. *Garison II* promises 128 levels with the fifth level and above randomly created by the computer. You can play a wizard, dwarf etc on a quest to find a herb, the homeopathic remedy for a beautiful princess' ailments. There's also a multi-player option, so long as only two players play at a time.

Basically the game is a Gauntlet clone – not as good as the original and a tad more expensive.

OVERALL SCORE 80

HUNTER KILLER
16 Blitz/£4.99 ST/Amiga



A Jap shell has busted me Sonar! Still, here's one juicy destroyer headed for Davey Jones' Locker.

David: *Hunter Killer* is a submarine sim set in the South Pacific. You get to command one of 11 US Navy subs in 14 different missions modelled on 'real WWII campaigns'. The missions are pitched at various difficulty levels and there are several variables you can adjust to make your task that much harder. Anyone who caught that excellent German mini-series *Das Boot* won't be too disappointed with the atmosphere of this game, as you sit at the bottom of the ocean while Jap destroyers circle your position 'pinging' their sonar at you! Blimey! Nail-biting stuff and no mistake. Maybe not as refined as Microprose's *Silent Service* or the forthcoming *688 Attack Sub* from Electronic Arts, but for a measely five sovs who's complaining!

OVERALL SCORE 89

BATTLESHIPS
Encore/£9.99 ST /Amiga

David: Since time in memorium, once someone's stumbled onto a successful formula there have been loads of attempts to cash in on the idea and 'improve' upon it.

Well, that time-honoured classic game *Battleships* has been no exception and here's the computer version courtesy of Elite's budget label Encore. Basically it's a competent conversion, with slight variations on the original gameplay. Instead of one shot each in turn, you get loads! (Well, four unless you opt for 'Salvo's On' where it's dependent upon the number of ships you have.) There's an animated sequence where your shots are executed and then it's back to the grid again. Sink all the enemy fleet, with at least one of your own surviving, and you've won. Er... and that's it really. Eighty two 'pee' for two biros and an exercise book in our local newsagents or £9.99 on ST or Amiga. The choice is yours.

OVERALL SCORE 55

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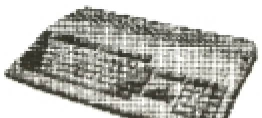
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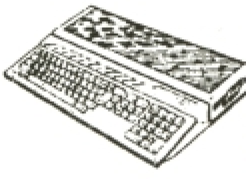
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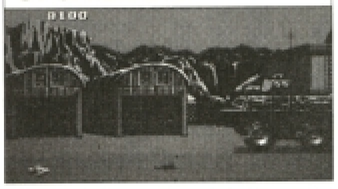
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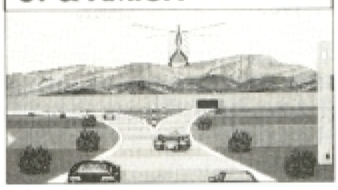
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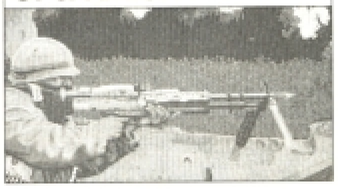
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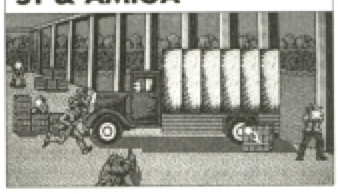
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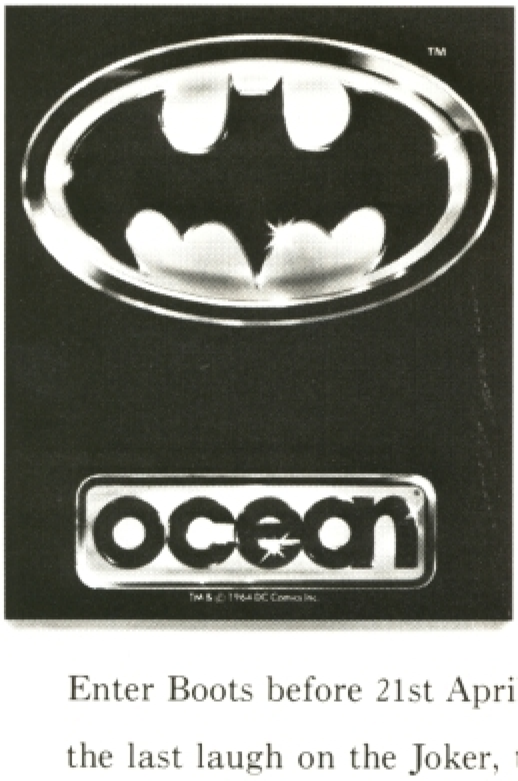
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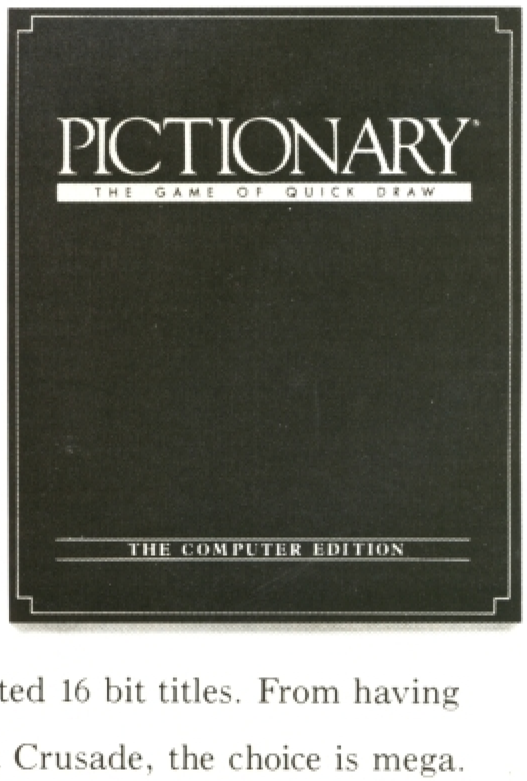
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What have a Housemartin, music and Jason Donavon got in common? Not a great deal, except *Steve 'Cobber' Phillips* is ZERO's answer to the chart-topping Aussie heart throb, and this month he not only talks MIDI but also interviews former Housemartin and now Beats International bod, Norman Cook!



Oh Norman please, not 'Chopsticks' again!

NORMAN'S WISDOM

In case the name isn't instantly recognisable, Norman Cook used to be one quarter of The Housemartins – the bass guitar playing quarter – to be precise. In the days before Kylie and 'Jase' invaded and successfully held the Top Ten against all odds, the Mad 'Martins (complete with the spots that Kylie and Jase go to such lengths to conceal) gave us some of the sweetest pop music of the day. Since then lead singer Paul Heaton has gone on to challenge the Aussie invasion with The Beautiful South and Norman... Well what has Norman been up to?

The story actually begins in the days before the 'Martins, when Norm used to spin records as a nightclub DJ. In those days DJ records were frowned upon by the mighty record companies and Norman was one of many pioneers who were struggling to get themselves heard. But while he was making wacky 'Martins vids, the musical barriers were being broken down, and he's now been able to return to his turntables with rather more commercial success. Last year his single *Blame It On The Bassline* charted, and his production work with Double Trouble and the Rebel MC, Vanessa Williams, The Real Roxanne ("And others too numerous to remember") did him no harm at all. Lined up are remixes for Cabaret Voltaire's *Silver Bullet, Stetsasonic* and *Digital Underground.* At the moment he's just charted with his Beats International single *Dub Be Good To Me.*

"I never actually hated computers."

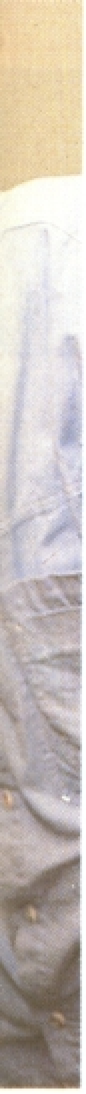
Most important of all is an album – not somebody else's, but Norman's first solo elpee. In fact, I've interrupted the final mixes (on your behalf, I might add) to talk about computers and music. Involved in the project are a variety of unlikely people including Billy Bragg and our very own Captain Sensible (I trust you caught the interview in ish two of ZERO), who played a bit of analog guitar. But back to computers – a cheerful and talkative Norman tells me that it wasn't exactly 'love at first sight'.

"I never actually hated computers," he says in his defence. "There are two things: a) I'd never touched a computer in my life – when I was at school we used to have discos to raise money to buy a school computer which was installed about a week before I left – so I'd never even touched one. I had a sort of fear of the unknown – everbody was talking about these computers and how they were going to take over our lives, and I had a phobia about them. And b), from a musical point of view, I don't like the unacceptable side of programmed electronic music – the Stock, Aitken and Waterman 'get a formula and a drum machine, and spend as little time and imagination in turning out a single.' I think I was wary of letting technology do all the dirty work and not leaving the musician's creativity in there. Having never understood how computers work, I assumed you'd say to the computer 'write me a hit song' and it'd do it by numbers or a formula. You sit there and press all the buttons and out comes a hit."

Of course, we know better, don't we children? But who or what put a likeable ex-Housemartin 'right' about computers?

"Being in studios where there were computers showed me that they didn't do anything for nowt – you still had to come up with the ideas. But then I got this other phobia about computers taking fifty times longer to do anything a musician could do. Being in the studio involved tons of sitting around watching someone slaving over a hot computer – swearing at it, hitting it... I thought





'what's the point?' If I have a good idea, by the time I've turned that idea into computer language, I'd be bored and would have forgotten why I wanted to do it. I thought gut reaction ideas were stifled by the amount of time it seemed to take to implement them."

"I had a little hardware sequencer of my own that was very immediate, and I thought that was a much better way of using technology than using a computer. I spent three days in a studio with Billy Bragg trying to do a dance single, and for three days we sat and played *Scalextric* while the engineer tried to put our ideas into the computer – I'd tell him what I wanted and go and play *Scalextric* for two hours – he'd come back and say 'is this right?', I'd say 'no' and he'd be off for another two hours... It just bored and upset me. I found *Scalextric* instantly more gratifying than the computer. Billy used to win most of the time, he must have spent more time in studios playing it than me. It's the sign of a misspent musical career."

"Then I went to a different studio and found an engineer who I thought was a computer whizz-kid who could do everything in two seconds. I brought my sequencer into the studio and he laughed at it – we'd be working away at opposite ends of the studio and he'd be doing my ideas quicker on the computer than I was on my sequencer. So then I thought computers were brilliant in the right hands. For two months I sat and watched the mouse flying across the screen going blip, blip, blip – I thought the bloke was a genius. Then one day he went to the toilet and I thought I'd try it myself and I found I was a computer genius too! It did seem amazing, 'cos I'd never touched a

Clenching his fist Norman emotionally recalls his computer phobia.



"I write everything in C, because there are no black notes, and then transpose it into the key it should be in."

computer before!"

It must be a good story – the hero gets the girl in the end. Okay, the good guy gets the computer in the end. And the computer that had finally won Norman's heart was a good ol' Atari ST running C-Lab *Creator* sequencing software (see the software round-up in the last thrilling Chip Shop Boys episode). But was he convinced enough to rush out and buy his own computer? He sure was – it was going to save him a lot of money!

"I didn't bother shopping around, I just went out and bought what they'd got in the studio – an ST and *Creator*. First of all I thought 'why am I paying for hours of studio time when all I'm doing is using the computer?'. Then I thought I could hire a computer and a sampler rather than the whole studio. Then when I found out the price I thought 'why not buy it?'.

"I think a lot of people who haven't had a lot of experience with computers expect them to cost five grand and take up half their house – that's what I thought. But I was very disappointed that it didn't have one of those boxes full of tape (like they used to have on *Joe 90*) that's what I think computers should be – boxes covered in lights that occasionally take over the world."

Fine, fine, the analyst will be along shortly. So just what is it that a bass-playing Housemartin is going to get out of a megalomanic computer? Can making music with a micro really be as easy as sitting down with a few ideas and a little black (well, a sort of creamy grey) box?

"Yeah, what I do is still limited by my knowledge of keyboards and arrangements, because I was never a keyboard player. Without a computer I would never have taken on making keyboard-based music – everything I do is still played on one finger. I write everything in C, because there are no black notes and then transpose it into the key it should be in. Computers are brilliant for little tricks like that.

Ah the wonders of modern science. Er hold on though, what if the song is in a minor key?

"Then I do it in A – it's still just white notes..."

For a minute there I thought we were in trouble.

"What I'm glad about is being able to use a computer without turning into a computer bore. Computer bores I rate about two points above train spotters in terms of the evolutionary cycle. I bought the computer, right, and I've never once opened the manual – which I think is a good approach to using technology. That way I only get the computer to do what I want it to do; I don't start saying 'oh look, it can do this!' I'm sure I'm only using about 10 per cent of the capacity of the computer but I'm certainly not getting side tracked.

"Another thing I did was consciously not buy any computer games because every musician I talk to buys a computer to write songs on and their friends give them all these wild games to play and they spend all their time getting caught up in that diversion instead of making music. Games players who think a computer is a bit like a new toy are about ten points above train spotters, but the ones who post their games to each other and get caught up in things like *Dungeons And Dragons* I'd put at the bottom of the evolutionary scale – just below elephants...

Heads down, all you arcade addicts.



Go on Norm, spin us a few tunes like in the good old days.

Hold on, what's this? A confession?

"Actually I have got one game."

I knew it, I knew it!

"It was given away free with a magazine – it's a police identikit thing. Have you seen that?"

Err, no...

"Remember those things with a magnet that were full of iron filings and you put on a blank face? It's like a hi-tech version of that where you can put different eyes and noses and spots and warts and things on, and you can move things around and colour things in... I must admit I spent about half an hour on that before I went and lost the disk."

"I found *Scalextric* instantly more gratifying than the computer."

Sounds to me like the perfect way to check out your new haircut before committing yourself to the horrors of Sweeny Todd!

"Yeah," agrees a bemused Norman, spotting another use for his Atari, "you can say 'what would I look like with a pink mohican?'."

Then again, making music doesn't sound like a bad alternative.

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MUSIC LESSONS

MIDI RIFF

Steve Philips may not show us his tummy, but there's nothing 'MIDI of the road' about Music Lesson this month, readers, it's full of 'feeling'!

You know, madness takes many forms – there's holiday madness (like some of the stuff we've seen over Christmas where otherwise sane people spend lots of money on members of their family that they hate and then get wildly drunk to celebrate), there's car madness (where otherwise mild-mannered individuals get into a car and drive as if they've become part of a life-size shoot 'em up) and there's computer madness. Programmers, for example, go blind and spotty and eventually forsake all their friends in favour of strings of '1's and '0's that give them nothing in return. But MIDI madness is an even more serious case. MIDI madness you see, turns gentle, creative human beings into soulless machines.

It all starts when you decide that playing 'proper' instruments – like drums and guitars – is all just too dull and you want to make music that sounds as if it's come from the 21st century rather than the 12th. So you buy (borrow or steal) a synthesizer and it's not long before you're up to yer ears in black boxes (and up to yer neck in debt). Next you connect all this junk together, push a few buttons and you're away – sounding a tad like a speeded up R2D2! There's absolutely nothing you can't do – you can sound as if you can 'play' almost any instrument, you can correct all the cock-ups you make as you record the music into your sequencer, even steal from other peoples' records with your sampler. You can do just about anything, that is, except sound like there was a human being (well, almost) involved in making the music. For some of us that's not a problem, but the rest of us turn to something called 'feel' or 'humanisation' functions.

Although they sound as if they've escaped from Playboy of Frankenstein, a Modern Prometheus, these functions can be found on most sequencers and sequencing software. In a nutshell (well, Christmas wasn't all that long ago and I'm still finding them in my bed!) what these functions do is give some of the 'feel' of a musician to music that's been created too perfectly on a computer. Brilliant!

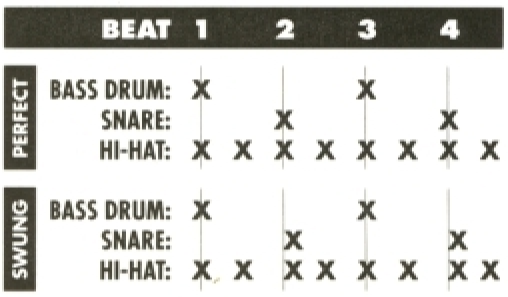


DIAGRAM 1

So what do they do, these machines with human souls? To understand, we must first look at what makes human beings 'human'. (*No jokes about flatulence or body odour, please. Ed.*) In musical terms, it's human error that stops a drummer, for example, sounding like a machine. Drummers aren't perfect and don't hit their drums exactly when they should – instead, the beats fall close to, but not on the beats. One simple way machines copy this imperfection is by delaying every other drum beat by a few milliseconds (thousandths of a second, or about the time it takes you to turn the radio off when Kylie comes on). In this way the feeling of mechanical perfect timing is taken away (see Diagram1).

Of course it's not all that simple – what is? Sometimes human drummers deliberately play behind the beat (later than they should). Sometimes this is to upset other musicians(!), but it can be used to make a song feel more relaxed. Alternatively a drummer may play in front of the beat to make a song sound more urgent. And these rules can be applied to any sort of musician – guitarist, saxophonist, chiropodist – and any sort of music – New Age, Space Age, Bond Age... What our clever software has to do is to find ways of fooling you into believing that there's some element of imperfection in the performance you're hearing. What we're actually trying to do is the opposite of the quantization functions that helped us turn a sloppy piece of playing into something presentable.

These tricks vary in cleverness and success – the delayed drum beats are okay, but the fact that it's every other beat that's delayed is rather a giveaway to our ears. One alternative is to partially quantize what you've played – instead of moving every note into the perfect position, only the start of the notes might be moved. Or the start and end points might be moved together so that all the notes start in the right place but any uneven note lengths you've played will be left alone (see Diagram 2). Most sequencing software these days will also let you advance or delay any of the parts you've recorded against all the others – rather like a real drummer pushing or pulling the beat. Cunning, these pike.

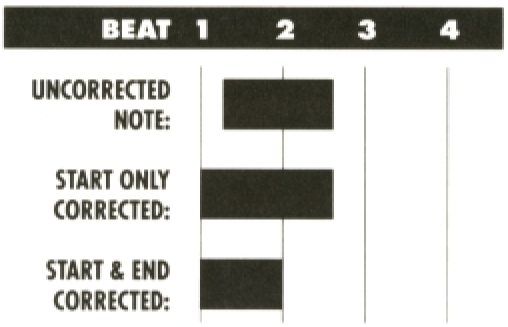


DIAGRAM 2

There's even one piece of software under development that's designed to give the 'feel' of different classical composers to the music you compose! Personally, I reckon that anyone who is clever enough to appreciate it can probably play it themselves already, but that's progress for you.

By far the most useful 'feel' functions are those that allow you to take the 'mistakes' or human error of one piece of music you've played and impose it on another. Suppose you've got the bass part 'feeling right', you can copy the same 'feel' (or irregularity in the playing) over to the drum part – or any other. You can find functions like this in C–Labs' *Creator* and *Notator* or The Digital Muse's *Virtuoso*, for example. Another feature of *Creator* and *Notator* is their ability to give pre-defined 'feels' to your music – you could spice up your uninspired drum part with a dose of the funk... Then there's a machine called The Feel Factory, made by an American company called Aphex, whose only purpose in life is to let you tweek an element of life into your electronically created music. Again, if you can afford it, you probably don't really need it.

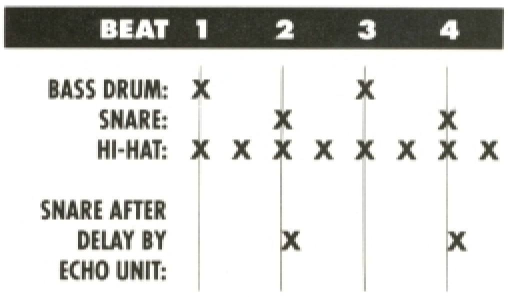


DIAGRAM 3

This is all very interesting if you've got the cash to buy the kit that'll let you do all these things. But what if you're stuck on a budget and you still want to put some soul into your music? The lesson to be learnt is to do what the human musicians do – don't make everything perfect, because they sure can't. Instead of quantizing everything so that it's mechanical, leave just one or two parts alone to disturb the rest – this is particularly effective with drum parts. You could even try leaving out one part, the snare drum for instance, and playing it on its own after the rest of the song is finished as if you were a real drummer (a fate worse than death) playing with the 'rest of the band'. If you're using an echo unit of any sort (a digital delay, say), you can try delaying one part of the recorded music using that, just to hear what you can do by changing the timing. If you want to advance one part, try delaying everything else with the echo – just remember to mix out the dry (undelayed) signal (see Diagram 3).

And there we have it... so what's this month's conclusion? The secret of a lot of music's success is its feel and computer technology has a way of stealing it, so try anything you can to get it back. Until next time, may the feel be with you...

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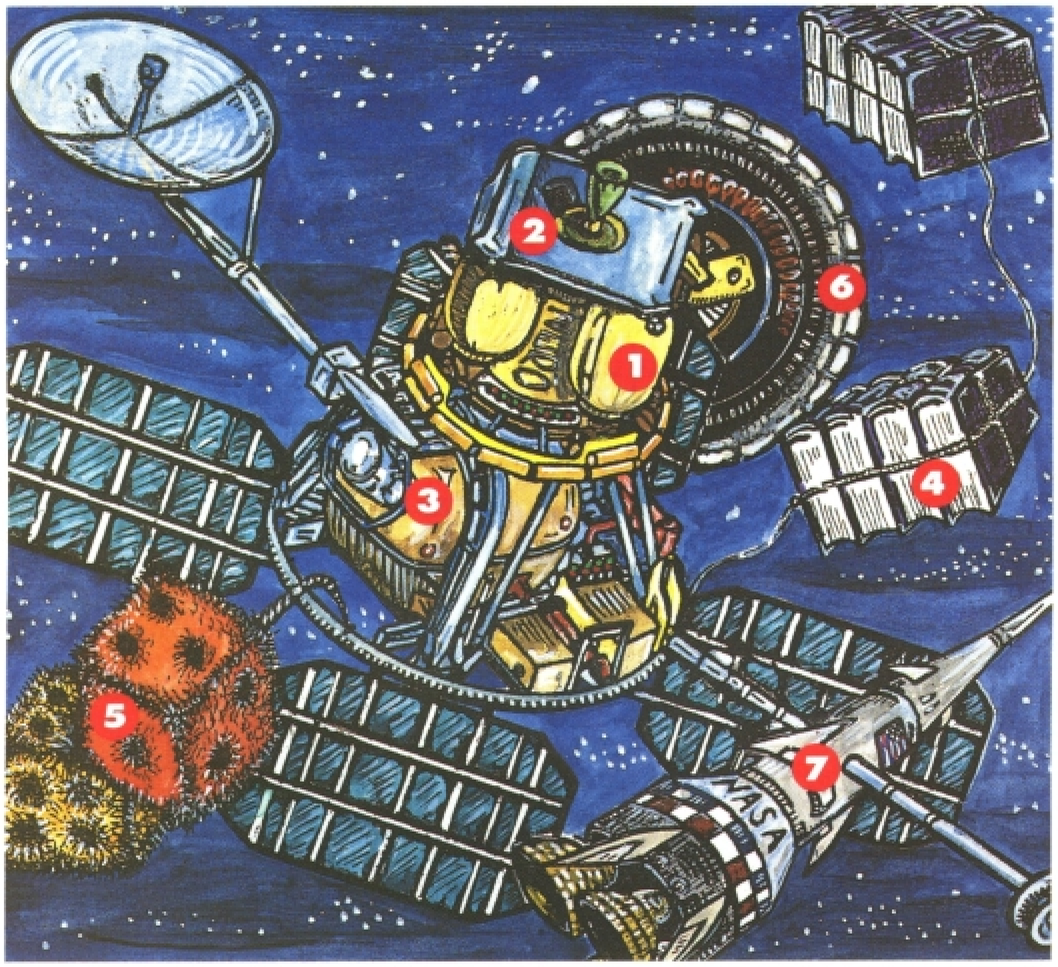
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Electronic Zoo is about to release *Xiphos* and it's looking like it's already going to be something special! It's part shoot 'em up and part 3D space flight sim and it's featured in an exclusive *Underwraps* this very ish! To celebrate this rather X-citing event, the rather generous folk at Electronic Zoo are offering a splendid satellite dish to the winner and 25 copies of their former release *Battle Squadron* as runners-up prizes! Just think, you'll never need to miss a Tyson fight again and Frank Bough will be back in your living room! Hurrah! Oh, and installation will be taken care of too. Yes, your dish will be 'pointed' at the Astra Comtel satellite bringing Sky Movies, MTV and six or so other groovy channels! Fancy that? Then...

... Dish ish What You Do!

There's a common factor in this compo, isn't there? That's right, it's space! *Xiphos* is set in space and satellites float about in space too. So, not wanting to miss out, ZERO has decided to jump on the bandwagon! We've designed the ZERO satellite! The only problem is it's proving too heavy for lift-off. This is where you come in. We want you to advise us as to which four items we can safely leave behind! If for example, you think rocket fuel is an unneccessary luxury (you're not very good at this are you?) then jot down 'Rocket Fuel' on the coupon below. Right, once you've spotted four such items, fill out the rest of the coupon, add your name and address, stick it on the back of a post card and send it to **Satellites In The Night, (Electronic) Zoo-Be Zoo-Be Zoo Compo, ZERO Compos, PO Box 1509, Enfield, Middlesex EN1 1LQ.**

1. Rocket Fuel
2. Propulsion Unit
3. Guidance System
4. Complete set of Encyclopedia Britannica
5. Furry Dice
6. Spare wheel
7. Airfix construction kit of Saturn V rocket

Rules

- Employees of Dennis Oneshots or Electronic Zoo found entering this compo will be summarily executed.
- All entries received after the 31st May 1990 will be satellite.
- The Editor's decision is final and no dish-cussion will be entered into.

SATELLITE COMPO

Hmmm, I doubt ZERO-Sat will get airborne unless you discard

the ____________________

the ____________________

and the ____________________

not to mention the bloomin' ____________________

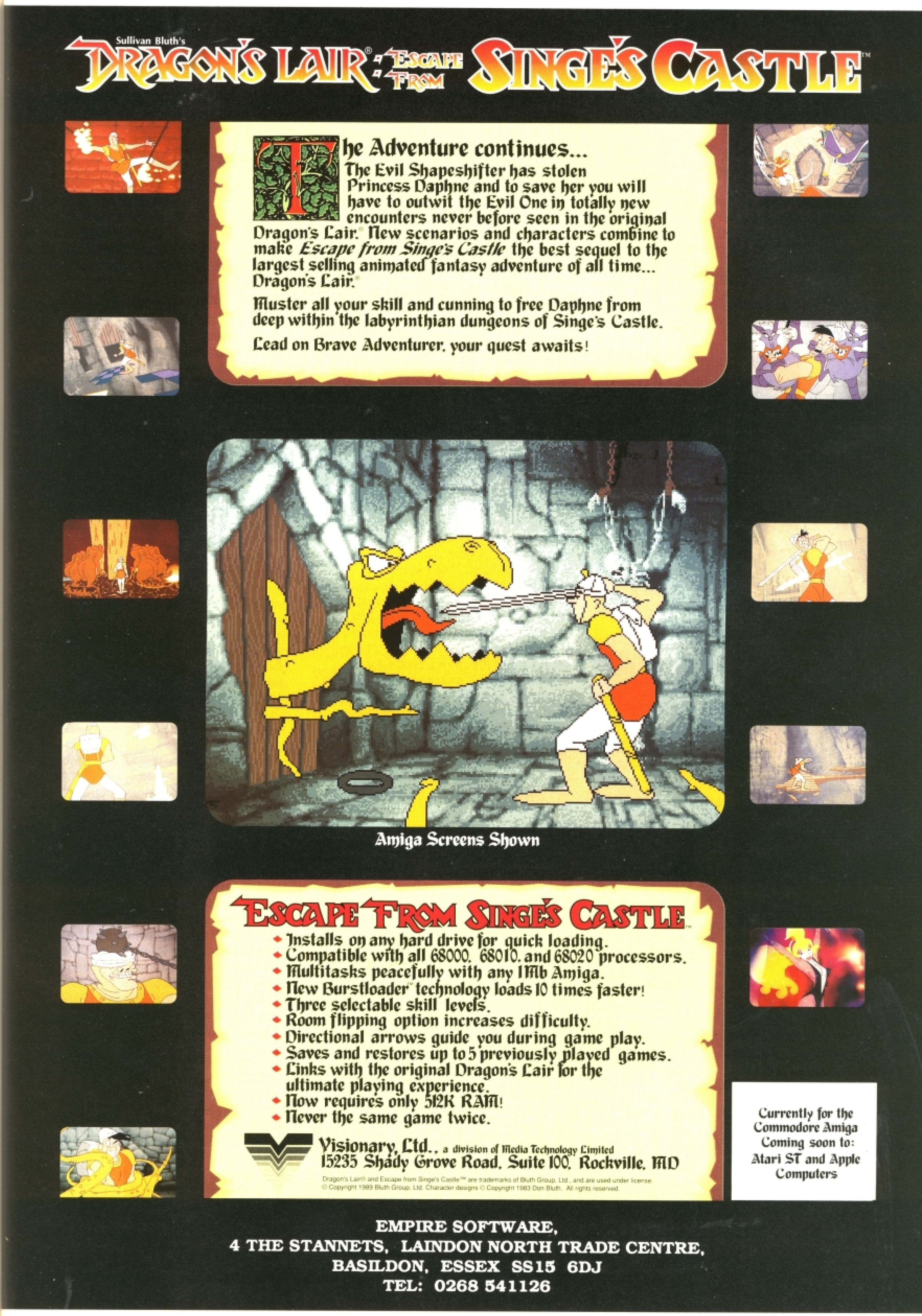
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My computer is... ST ☐ **Amiga** ☐ **PC** ☐



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ADVENTURES

MY PLAYLIST

In the first issue of this wondrous organ I said that it was hard to define exactly what constituted an adventure these days. Lo and behold, the editor's sent me three games to review, and they're all very different but all recognisably adventures. One is a text-based game, the second is more of a strategy/trading adventure, and the third is a terrific graphical RPG game in the great tradition of *Dungeon Master, Bard's Tale* and *Bloodwych*. I've been having such a terrific time playing them that My Play List has had to expand to take them all in. It's a hard life being an adventure reviewer.



And it's over to *Mike Gerrard*, the bearded adventurer extraordinaire who brings you not only magic rings, shrouded skulls and gut-shredding sharks but also an exploding parrot which has never set foot in Norway.

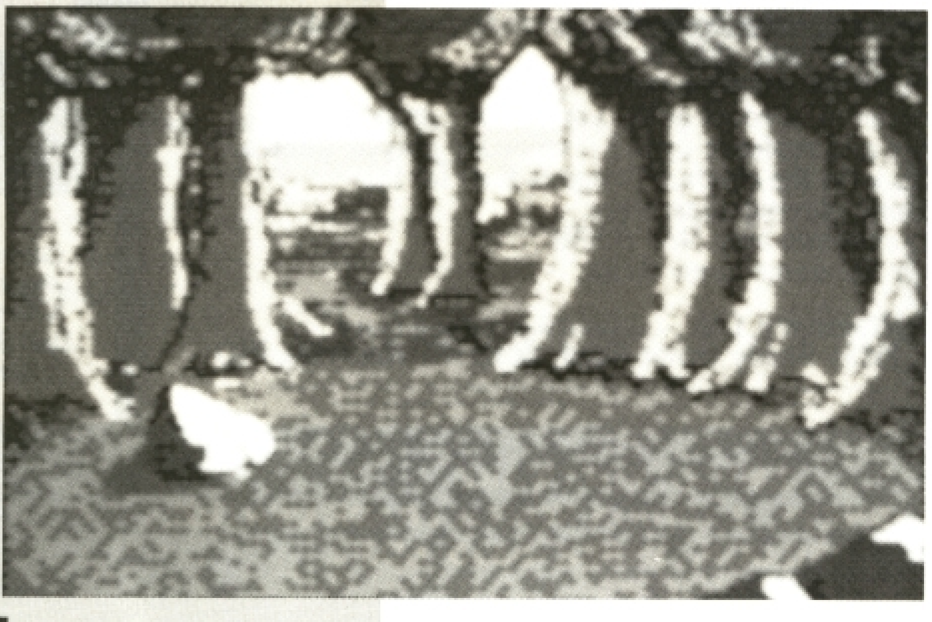


DEMON'S TOMB

In the beginning was the word or so I've heard, so let's look at the text-game first. *Demon's Tomb: The Awakening* is from Melbourne House, the company that gave us *The Hobbit, Sherlock* and other classic 8-bit titles. They show that the text-adventure is far from dead, providing you do it with style, and *Demon's Tomb* certainly has that. It also has excellent graphics, but they're contained on a separate disk and you don't need to access them if you're a piccie-hater.

Everyone will see the loading screen, of course, and that's a lovely horrific number with a shrouded skull looking down on a burning human figure suspended over the top of Stonehenge. I like text as much as the next man, but can appreciate a great graphic when I see one. In fact there's a lot to be said for piccies when you try to read the drivel in the accompanying booklet. Try as I might, I just can't get into a story called "The Revelations of Klaadra", which has characters with names like Barfwyd and Darsuggotha. I mean, Barfwyd? Good grief. *(That's my mum's name actually. You're fired. Ed.)*

Never mind, let's get stuck into the game. This throws you right in it by having to face a fire that's spreading through some underground caverns with a vengeance. You know you can't escape, but with a bit of thought and legwork you can save some of the precious objects that are around. You're Professor Edward Lynton, an academic and archaelogist, on an underground dig, but you've somehow been locked in these caverns and must save your precious notes from the flames that are creeping ever closer. You've just enough moves to do it, and I really liked this prologue which takes an hour or so and gets you right in the mood for the main game. Don't be put off by the glaring error in the game and in the packaging: you're told that it's Sunday March 20th, 1990 which is fine, except that March 20th is a Tuesday! I know programmers are weird creatures, but surely they've heard of calendars?



The main game switches you to being Richard Lynton, the Prof's son, and you set out looking for your dad when he doesn't turn up to meet you as arranged. This is why it's so important for the Prof to protect his diaries and a few other items – if he doesn't, they won't be there for Richard to help him in his part of the game. This begins in a car park near Culcombe Manor, where a couple of mysterious deaths have been reported recently. When the Prof doesn't show, off you go to snoop around: along bridle paths, over packhorse bridges, across a ford, up a pinnacle, across a marsh and into the tomb where your father's remains are lying. Not that it's as straightforward as that, of course.

It's a traditional approach to adventuring, where you have to find something to wedge the door of the tomb open to prevent it closing behind you, and work out how to get the rabbit to come out of its rabbit hole. But it's all very stylishly done and I'd like to see it sell well to prove that there are still lots of people who want this kind of game. Come on, you text-only fans, put your money where your mouth is.

The text is well-written and convincing and the system has all the features you could want: RAMSAVE,



UNDO, BRIEF/SUPERBRIEF/VERBOSE descriptions, multiple inputs, wide choice of screen layouts, a text or a menu mode, macros to define your own keyboard commands and a very sensible parser. This lists all the possible exits if you just type GO, or if you type EXAMINE LETTER and there are two of them, it lists the two and asks you which one you mean. Not like some parsers where this creates chaos. There's even a panic button for when the boss walks in on you and you should be working. And given a choice between *Demon's Tomb* and work, I know which I'd choose.

● Demon's Tomb
Amiga, ST and PC
£19.99, £19.99 and £24.99
Melbourne House

DRAKKHEN

Let's take a look at a little number called *Drakkhen*. It proves how you really need to persevere with some games, before you can start to get into them. I'd almost given up as I seemed to be killed at every turn and was getting nowhere pronto. But all along I was sussing out the system and when it suddenly started to work together, I changed my mind about the game completely.

It's in the great RPG tradition and you create a team of four characters to enter the realm of the dragon and absorb his power. That's the gist of it, I think, although the booklet takes 78 pages to tell you. There's a separate game-playing booklet too, and you really need to study those instructions to get to grips with deciding who your leader is, how to arm your merry men and women, how to swap items around, choose between swords and spells and so on. If you don't, as I didn't at first, it's a case of getting marmalised at once and 'Play again?' folks.

You begin in an exterior landscape and here the ST and Amiga versions play very differently. Infogrames swears that it's random, but on the Amiga you get blood-curdling monsters launching themselves at you at once, while the ST version allows your group to stroll casually to the nearby castle without encountering so much as a Jack Russell Terrier snapping at your heels. By the time you reach the castle you should arm your group and prepare them for battle, as once across the moat you'll be plunged into the thick of it.

Getting across the moat isn't easy – in fact it's one of the game's weak spots. There are sharks circling the moat, and if you cross the bridge one leaps out of the water to munch you for brekkie. You then have to reload your game as there's no point in entering without a gang of four, and it takes ages to sneak one of your characters across. You have to wait till the shark's passed the figure on the right of the screen, and then run for it. Even then it doesn't always work. It's the half-minute wait while you reload your game that's annoying.

Once you're 'safely' inside, *Drakkhen* is brilliant! The graphics are first class, with the ST every bit as good as the Amiga and the game-play is great. The characters can keep together or wander separately round the castle's rooms and dungeons. However, if they split up, it won't be very long before you're controlling one and you hear a slurp-munch-munch from elsewhere as someone's just been ripped apart.

You can click from one character to another instantly and drag weapons and defensive items around just as you like. As with *Dungeon Master*, the light fades unless you've got a regular supply of torches and fortunately there are plenty round the castle walls. Background details on the screens are better than *Dungeon Master*, though the monsters are slightly less detailed. Some fantastic fight sequences though when your gang of four gets attacked and the hack-slay-squelch-gouge-clatter comes thick and fast. This is definitely going to be one on everyone's play-list over the next few months and beyond. I'm sure *Drakkhen's* got a lot of secrets it'll be very slow to reveal.

● Drakkhen
Amiga, ST and PC
£29.99
Infogrames

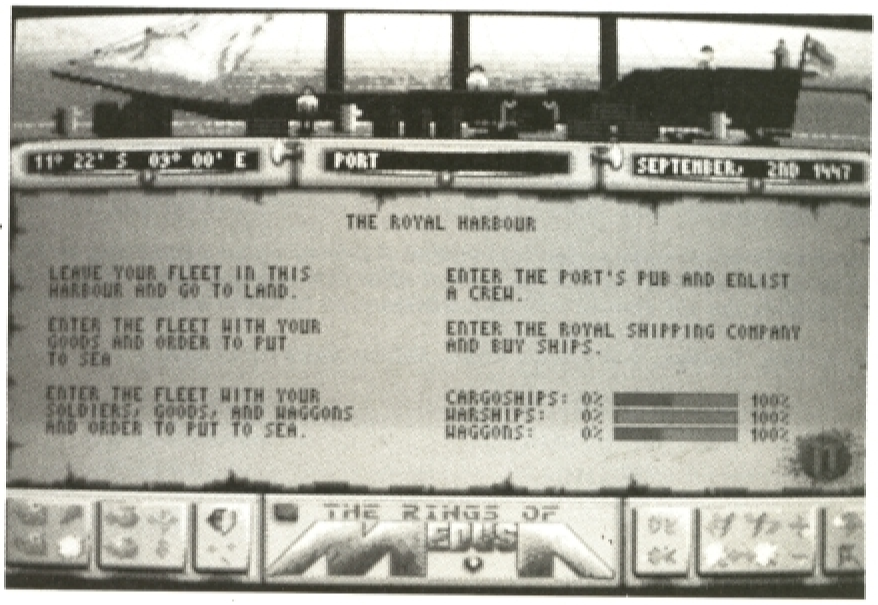
RINGS OF MEDUSA

I was so taken by the first two games I left myself hardly any time to play the third one: *Rings of Medusa*. It's also less my kind of game, being more to do with trading and strategy. You play the son of a King on an unknown planet, who must find five rings in order to defeat the goddess Medusa. You begin with next-to-nothing and in something like Ultima style, you move your figure across a landscape that looks more like medieval England than up Uranus way. You can enter (or try to) the various cities, as well as probably getting bashed up by a hostile army on the way. In a city you can hire men and arm them, provided you have the cash to pay for it all. You can always borrow this from the bank, but remember that the day of reckoning always comes round! You can also arrange to trade in various goods, but then you'll need a ship to transport them, which means choosing between a cargo ship for simple trading, or a battleship which will also house your army of men. Make sure you can afford the sailors' wages, too. They won't do the work just for the rum, bum and concertina, you know.

I didn't spend nearly long enough with this game to get the most from it, but that's also because it isn't the kind of game that grabs me by the interface and demands that I uncover its innermost secrets. If you're into strategy games, I definitely recommend you give it a look, as it seems to have been put together with a great of attention to detail. It's converted from a German original so should be full of Teutonic efficiency, if a little low on excitement.

● Rings of Medusa
Amiga and ST £29.99
Starbyte Software

Yikes! I think it's time to hire some staff but I'm not very good with bawdy sailors. If only I could remember their fave Village People tune... ▶





CLUES-EAU

DEAR AUNTY MIKE...

Bonjour mah leetle 'ushpuppies et welcome encore to zis, mah special corner of zis magnifique magazine, which publish mah clues and tippie-poos and all zat kind of a thing, you know? Ah joos lerve to cast mah leetle froggy eyes on your French letters to moi, bert ah 'ave to say, an' I shall say zis only once, if you, ze noble readair, wishes to receive a reply personal, if you know what I mean you naughty little peeples, zen you murst enclose ze envelope avec le address et le stamp. Comprenez? Some of ze peeples whose questions ah 'ave answered zis mernth, forgot to do zis thing, an' so zey 'ave been kepped waiting for ze naughty know-how. Bert it iz all compleetly zere own fault as you Britishers say, n'est-ce pas?

ADVENTURE HEALTH WARNING: Reading the following may seriously damage your adventure fun – unless you're completely crap anyway.

HIPPY HIPPY SHAKEN



"Greetings from a hippy in distress. Yes, I need the hippy hot-line to brighten my window-cleaning in the arcade-adventure, *Future Wars.* I'm stuck in the room with the typewriter. Help!"

This pathetic plea comes from **Michael Smith** of Bradford, a reet gradely 'ippy in a flat cap. In this room Michael, walk to the second cupboard from the left, and use the key on the cupboard. Then examine the big typewriter, which provides you with a password. Walk to the desk, operate the drawer, take it, examine the map, use the little flag on the little hole and then you can enter the secret passage.

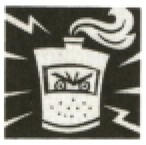
FISHING FOR CLUES



Ben Byer of Stoneygate is stumped by *Fish!*, as well he might be. He's done two of the three warps at the start but is stuck on the smooth one. He's having trouble with an exploding parrot (hem hem).

The parrot will explode anyway, and you can't get it out of the cage by getting hold of it, so what you have to do is simply open the cage, then step outside the forge. The parrot will fly out of its own accord and go and explode somewhere in the forest. Meanwhile you can go back in and get the mould out of the cage. Easy as falling off a perch.

ORC-WARD CUSTOMERS



"Having just bought an Amiga 500," say **Wendy** and **Jezz Hawkins** of Derby, "we went in search of an adventure game and the sales assistant assured us that *Knight Orc* was just the thing." (Just the thing he'd got in stock, I think he meant). "The game is brill, but having got a hint request card with the game we went to send off for a hint sheet but the address is Firebird, New Jersey, USA! The address on the box is Telecomsoft, California... and they want an *sae.*"

Using more detective work Wendy and Jezz contacted Rainbird in the UK, then ZERO who put them on to MicroProse (who'd taken over Rainbird). MicroProse assured them that no hint sheet was available for *Knight Orc*. So back they came to ZERO.

Hint sheets on the various adventures written by Level 9 and published by Rainbird *(Knight Orc, Jewels of Darkness, Silicon Dreams)* are available free from the awfully nice Level 9 people direct. Send them an *sae* and the card that's in the box. Basically Rainbird totally cocked up the clue-sheet service, so Level 9 stepped in and offered to do it itself, as it always does with the titles it's published. It's one of these wacky software companies that believes strongly in customer support, so it'll probably never be rich but the staff will always be jolly good to deal with. Contact them at PO Box 39, Weston-super-Mare, Avon B524 9UR.

KING DANIEL I



Six trillion and eighteen thanks go to **Daniel Jones** of Reigate for being a jolly decent cove and sending in his solution to Sierra's *King's Quest IV*. Instead of the usual edited highlights, I'll adapt Daniel's very sensible suggestion of explaining the order in which you can do things.

Things which are possible at the beginning: using the gold ball, in the dwarves' house and the mine; in the fisherman's house getting the magic fruit, dealing with the whale, getting the bridle and putting it on the unicorn.

Things which are only possible after getting the unicorn: getting the dog out of the way and getting the hen that lays the golden eggs.

Possible after getting the hen: the witches' cave and the scarab, opening the trapdoor, opening the crypt and getting Pandora's Box, killing Lolotte and taking the talisman back to Genesta. STOP

CLAIM YOUR SYNTAX DISCOUNT HERE

What with the new Poll Tax, the last thing you might want is another tax but if that's the case then you haven't tried *Syntax*, the ST adventure magazine on a disk. It's published bi-monthly and sometimes once every two months as well. It's got clues, news, reviews, gnus, stews and all other kinds of adventure-related stuff too.

Your *Syntax* would normally cost you £3.50 a time but the ZERO adventure page is making an offer you can't refuse – a quid off, making it only £2.50. For that you'll get the latest spiffing issue for little more than the cost of the single-sided disk it comes on!

I enclose my cheque/postal order/international money order amounting to £2.50 for my copy of the latest *Syntax*, as per the special offer in the magnificent ZERO magazine. Readers outside the UK should add an additional £1 to cover extra postage costs.

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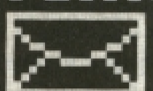
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AU REVOIR MES PETITS AMIS



I cannot zay 'ow murch it pains me to 'ave to zay thees but I 'ave run out of rhoom again so I shell keep up my detectif wurk and will await all ze tips, cheats, 'ints and anyzing elze you like to tell me – petits problemes of an intensely pursonal nature etc... So az you Inglish zay 'Cheerio' and write to ZERO, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE. I shall comb my 'edgehog whilst I await all your leetle tipettes.

WORLDWIDE SOFTWARE
106A Chilwell Rd, Beeston, Nottingham NG9 1ES

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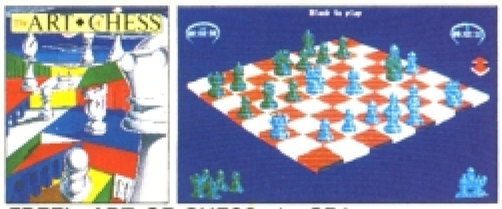
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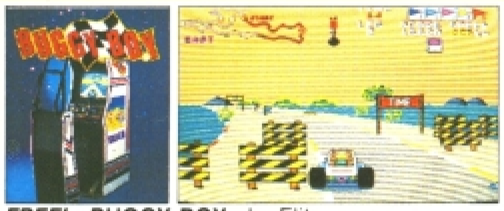

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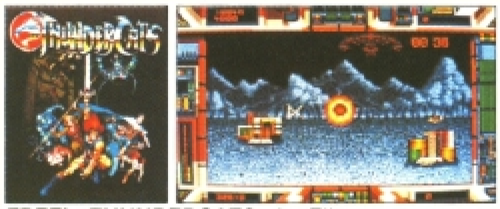

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yikes! THE READERS' PAGES

HIGHEST JOYSTICK IN THE WORLD

Every month Yikes! asks you to stick a joystick in a carrier bag, cart it somewhere quite high and photograph it – and this month is no exception. There are two categories: land based altitude and aircraft aided altitude.

Send all your old crap to Yikes! ZERO, Dennis Publishing, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE – there might even be a rather super free 'gift' in it for you (if we feel like it).

ASTRONOMY CORNER

by PROFESSOR GORDON NEBULA (Great Britain's first astronaut)

Greetings fellow stargazers. You may recall from last month that a black hole has been found in the asteroid belt. Well I went out there in the space shuttle with Heather Couper and some NASA scientists, we picked it up in an electro-magnetic field and brought it back to earth. We thought it was going to be the size of a football, but it turned out to be more like a Rolo. It's currently in my kitchen and Heather and I are conducting experiments on it.

The first idea we hatched was to put it in the microwave oven (on defrost) for 30 minutes. Nothing happened though. Neither of us could think of another experiment to do – until Heather suddenly had the brilliant idea of seeing how many cornflakes it could swallow up, so we started dropping individual flakes into the thing. An hour later we'd emptied two whole 500g boxes of the popular breakfast cereal into the mysterious tiny collapsed star, and there were still no signs of it becoming clogged. So, our conclusion was that a black hole can consume an infinite number of cornflakes. We phoned NASA and told them. Then we decided to see if it would float, so we had to move it (using the electromagnetic field device) to the washing-up basin. But disaster struck. Heather 'Butterfingers' Couper (the world's only female astronomer) dropped the magnetic-field remote control unit, which landed on the 'off' switch. The black hole dropped like a brick, went straight through my kitchen floor and sucked its way down to the centre of the earth, where it's now slowly eating up the planet from the inside. Earth is doomed and it's all Heather Couper's fault. I phoned Patrick Moore to grass Heather up, but Claire Rayner answered, told me he was in the jacuzzi and hung up.





First up we have **David Harrison** of **Wood Green** in **London** who has literally smashed the aircraft aided record (which was last month set at 3,700 feet). The picture shows a Quickshot II next to an aeroplane window: and outside the aeroplane window is a smallish chunk of the Himalayas – seen from way above. On the back of the photo there was a signature and a bit of writing which said this: *Bill Sullivan (Captain) – Estimate 37,000 feet.* Hmm, some skullduggery afoot here, we'll be bound. The photograph isn't of the Polaroid 'instant picture' variety, which means it must have been developed using the traditional and rather slower 'Prontoprint' method. So how come the pilot was able to sign the back then? Was there an on-plane film developing service? We don't think so somehow. Still, the photo speaks for itself so a prize is on the way.

Stewart Bell of **Glasgow** sent us this shot of a Konix Speedking perched on top of a 22 storey building. We in turn sent it to Scotland Yard's photographic evidence department, where they have the facilities to enlarge pictures to ridiculous proportions. Is the joystick there or not? We'll know by the end of the month thanks to the boys in blue. Mind you, even if it is there it's not going to beat the record set by Fraser MacDonald in the last ish – so all that highly skilled police work is going to be for nothing (still, it'll keep them off the streets).

No prizes for **Gary Partis** of **Merseyside** either. Here's the letter he sent:

Dear Sir,

Your article concerning the mixing of joysticks and high altitude was recently brought to my attention and, as a result, I have decided to broadcast my achievement.

During the winter of 1982, a friend and I climbed the mountain Hellvelain in the Himalayas – as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Arrow team we had to monitor conditions above the comos layer (which starts at 97 million feet above sea level). We decided to take a BBC model B, which we found was most suitable for the job. With it we took a 2.5 volt battery kit, a BBC microcomputer teletext system, a 6502 second processor, twin 40/80 dual sided 5.25" disk drives, Acorn DFS, Epson FX80 printer, a MicroVitec CUB 452 monitor, Z80 second processor, ATS ROM, an Atari Track-Ball, a copy of AMX Art, a small lump of lard, a home made 16K sideways RAM extension, a Pentel 0.5mm P205 pencil, a dust cover attractively finished in Acorn cream, a box of ten cheapo disks and a pair of Voltmace Analogue joysticks. Unfortunately we didn't have a camera.

Come on, do you want to be a record breaker? Then carry your joystick and a camera with you wherever you go. Climb a mountain. Go up in a balloon. Hijack a Space Shuttle. Do it any way you want. Oh, and there's a special prize for the first person to do a commercial aeroplane cockpit interior shot which includes a) the altimeter, b) one of the pilots (preferably the captain), and c) your joystick (of course).



BLACK SHAPE

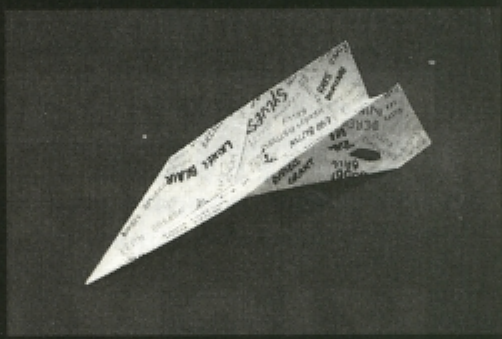
The Alternative Letters Page

Oh dear. I'm a rather depressed Black Shape this month actually. In fact there's every possibility that after I've answered your letters I'm going to take an overdose of paracetamol tablets and vodka. I'm just not getting enough mail – that's the problem. Does anybody care about a poor Shape who just wants to have a 'chat'? It would appear not.

Dear Black Shape,
Don't worry, I'm here to save you. I won't let you die or wither up through lack of mail! Even though I've got nothing special to say and the stamp will cost me 20p, it's all in a good cause. Besides, I want to be the first person to wear one of your ever so trendy T-shirts. Also no-one ever mentions Peterborough in magazines, so go on, make a lot of awfully nice people very happy and print my letter.
Catherine Myszka
Peterborough.
● *Let's get married and go and live in the South of France!* **Black Shape.**

Dear Shape,
I very much enjoyed reading the first issue of the magazine and although a newcomer to computer gaming found it extremely informative. I would however like to ask you a personal favour!! I have two small children (six and eight years old) and would appreciate it if you could continue to (and expand if possible) reporting on young children's games and educational material so I can get them 'hooked' and justify to the missus my buying a home (games) computer.
P. Cobth
Portslade, East Sussex.
● *Firstly let me apologise if I've got your name wrong but your writing was a bit iffy (did you write the letter during an earthquake?) Anyway, let me have a quick word with your wife... Mrs Cobth – you should let your husband buy a computer: here are several good reasons for having one around.*
a) It'll keep the kids out of your hair.
b) When you want them to do something (i.e. tidy up or mend the car) you can use the withdrawal of computer games as a blackmailing device.
c) A computer will also keep your husband out of your hair.
(d) You can arrange a deal with him – you'll let him buy a computer 'for the kids' only if he does the washing up and ironing for a year. **Black Shape.**

Dear Black Shape,
I have noticed a number of strange things and would like to share them with you:
1) Why is it that a song you really like always gets played on the car radio when you've reached your destination?
2) Where do all the odd socks go?
3) If you book a foreign holiday there is always a heatwave in Britain – but if you stay at home the weather is miserable.
4) However many times I write in to ZERO I never get a letter published.
5) Where can I buy a pair of Rainbow pyjamas?
Robert Wilkins
Carmarthen, Dyffed.
● *1) What's equally annoying is that whenever you've heard a new record for the first time (and think it's brilliant), just as the DJ is about to announce the name of the unknown band the car you're travelling in always goes underneath a bridge!*
2) Probably the same place that birds go to die.
3) The trick is to book a holiday in Iceland and then not go. That way whatever the weather's like here, you can be sure it's better than that of your cancelled holiday destination. Anyway, with the greenhouse effect well underway it won't be necessary to take holidays for very much longer – you'll even be able to sunbathe in Manchester.
4) What utter tosh. You've written two letters and they've both gone in!
5) Apparently some branches of Seven Eleven carry them. **Black Shape.**



Dear Black Shape,
I have observed your Yikes! interview section with great interest, and more than my fair share of stimulation – for your choice of interviewees has struck a harmonius chord deep within my soul. The piece of paper I have enclosed in the envelope is the 'Celebrity Plane', jam-packed to the brim with celebrities. It was completed about a year ago in an unsupervised French lesson. Jez, Beadle, Bungle, Norris and Bob are all there. You have disappointed me somewhat with Pete Waterman, as he made no appearence on our paper projectile. However, as a symbol of my appreciation I am giving to you this aeromobile of papyrus to do with as you will. Use it for ideas for new celebrities. Use it for poking dogs. Use it as you will. I ask for nothing in return – but I will rest easy that the definitive dictionary of popular personalities is in good hands. Go forth with our blessings.
Jonathan, Paul, Mark and David Arnold, Nottingham.
● *The only place I'm going forth to is the medicine cabinet – to get the paracetamol tablets. Will I overcome my depression to return next ish? Or will my suicide bid prove successful? Man the stomach pumps. Oblivion ahoy! Only you lot can save me – I need your letters; erm, but I don't want any crap ones though. Tune in next month to find out if this is going to be a correspondence free zone.* **Black Shape.** (Sound of a black shape trying to open a child-proof paracetamol bottle).



HMSO

BUILDING TIPS

by ROBERT McALPINE JUNIOR

Hello builders! Robert 'Jailbird' McAlpine Jnr here again. If you're a regular reader you may recall that last month saw me stuck behind bars on charges of contempt of court and actual bodily harm. Well, that's where I am this month too – still behind bars. I'm 'doing bird' as they say. My lawyer can't seem to get bail sorted out, so I'm stuck here until my trial begins. And what a time to be inside – I've just received a letter from Euro-tunnel chairman Alastair Morton, who's requesting my services on the Channel Tunnel. Think of all that work up for grabs. I informed him of my circumstances, and he said that he's prepared to wait for two months. The trouble is that my trial is set for November!

So, to cut a long story short, I've decided to make a break for it. I'm going to go over the wall (or possibly under it – I haven't got the plans together yet). The window in my cell is a bit loose but unfortunately I haven't got any 'tools' to work at it with – so if anyone could send me anything at all (a small blade, a teaspoon: anything) then I'd be most grateful. Anyway, onto your letters: firstly Dale Wilks of Cambridge.

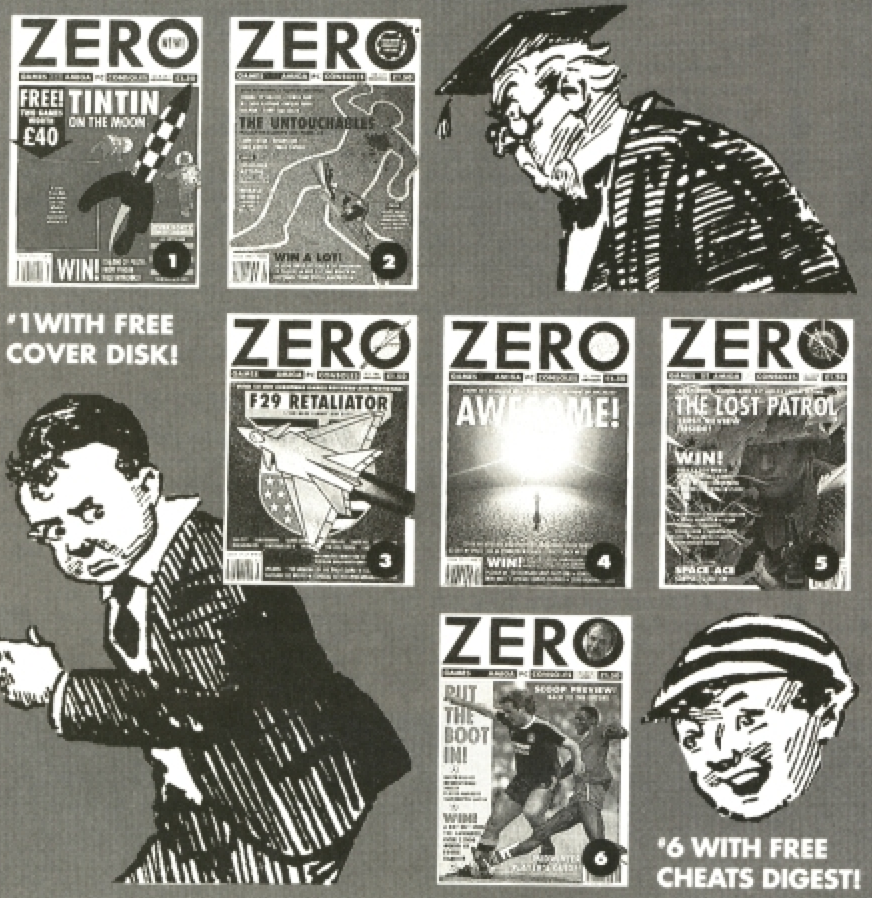
Dear Mr McAlpine Jnr,
Here is a little plumbing tippette for you, for leaky pipe situations:
1) Go out and buy a wet-suit, goggles and an oxygen tank.
2) Fill the room containing the offending pipe with water.
3) Look for air bubbles and you've found the leak.
4) Mark the hole with waterproof yellow sticky-backed plastic.
5) Open all windows and doors.
6) Stick blu-tack over the hole and voilà! A perfect job.
P.S. Why is it called plumbing? Lead pipes look and taste nothing like plumbs.

Thanks for the tip. And regarding your P.S., I simply don't know. My *1990 Builders Almanac* wasn't of much help either. Maybe another reader will be able to tell us. I had a letter from Angela Parsons of Chiswick who had this to ask:

Dear Robert,
I'm currently trying to form my own company – an all woman building and decorating concern. While I'm aware that women cannot carry the same loads as men, we do have one thing going for us in that we don't smoke countless roll-ups and take 50 tea breaks every day. So, while a woman may have to make two wheelbarrow trips compared to a man's one, the time saved by not smoking or drinking more than makes up for it. Anyway, I have a question. Dumper trucks. Are they hard to drive? (I can drive my car quite well.)

Hmm, another dumper truck question. (I had one last month, you see.) Well, Angela, the answer is "it depends". Some people find them easy to control while others find them hard. The thing about dumpers is that the wheels at the front are fixed, and you steer those at the back. Probably the best advice I can give you is to practise reversing your car around a building site for a couple of days – it's very much the same thing (except you'll be facing in the wrong direction and you won't be able to carry three tons of hardcore).

Anyway, with that question sorted it's time to wrap it up again for this month – after all, I've got to get my escape plans underway. So if you've got any construction or demolition tips or queries don't hesitate to ask – after all, building can be safe if you do things the Robert McAlpine way and you might well earn a prize to boot.



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- Amiga freaks get writing to me for swops and tips etc. Must be fast. 100% reply. Write to Colin Stevenson, 2 Mona Flats, Jubilee Road, Barmouth, Gwendd LL42 1LT.
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- Amiga contacts wanted. Beginners more than welcome. 100 per cent reply. Send disks or lists to Andy Rock, 41 Allt-Yr-YN Avenue, Newport, Gwent or phone (0633) 254145 after 6pm. Bye!
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WANTED

- Megadrive games wanted. Will pay around £15-20. Send list to M.K., 7 Montgomery Street, Birmingham B11 1EN. Will also consider swops.
- Wanted Amiga contacts, send disks or lists to Màrcus, 6 Churcher Close, Alverstock, Gosport, Hants PO12 2SL. Must be fast and reliable. Hi to Assassan, Zorro and The Janitor.
- Wanted PC Engine, Sega, Nintendo games. Will pay £5 to £15 per game. Send your list, address and phone number to Graham Schofield, 15 Beech Road, Bedfont, Middlesex TW14 8AH.
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- Wanted ST demo contacts. Sorry no beginners. Call David (0532) 640330.
- Wanted Nintendo Gameboy, new or secondhand with or without games. Good price please. Phone (0992) 58322 after 4pm. Ask for Paul Whatley or write to 61 Brookside, Hertford, Herts. S113 7LJ.
- Wanted Sega games. Will pay up to £10 per game. Phone Mr. S. Aly on (01) 871 9398.
- Wanted *Bubble Bobble I* for the Amiga. Call Jenny Young on (0532) 780376 or write to me at 28 Langdale Terrace, Leeds LS6 3DY.

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- Sweet talking, sweeter looking lad (21) wants female (similar age) with Amiga. 100 per cent reply guaranteed. Write to Olly, 226 Starkie Road, Tonge Moor, Bolton BLZ ZEL.

MESSAGES AND EVENTS

- Help! Any ST modem users in my area, otherwise we are going to take out a mortgage for the phone calls. Contact Darryl, 17 Millpond Street, Ross Herefordshire HR9 7AP.

FANZINES

- *Sega Mode* – bi-monthly newsletter/ fanzine dedicated to the Sega. Contact Andrew Hudson, 6 Abermarle Road, St Ives, Cambs PE17 6UN. Tel: (0480) 64639.
- Anyone interested in creating an Amiga user magazine please contact me as soon as possible. So get scribbling to J.R. Solomon, 53 Newfield Road, West Hagley, West Midlands DY9 OHY.

BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES AND DIVORCE

- Hooray! Peter Morrison divorced his Amiga 500 and married an Atari! Sorry about your fez. Yip yip yip!
- Newsflash! Jon Bon Jovi has divorced Dorothea (okay so he hasn't but I can dream, can't I?) Signed A. Bimbo.
- Divorced at last. Oprah Winfrey has divorced her horrible hubby. She will be marrying me! Not true but I can dream, can't I? RKL.

STOP

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COMPUTER SHOPPER SHOW 1990



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" A very good show and a great morale booster. We did extremely well and our products sold in droves."
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THE first **Computer Shopper Show** attracted over 27,500 visitors in three days. Over 3,000 people had to be turned away on the last day due to totally overwhelming demand. And what led to this runaway success, at a time when most computer shows are experience declining interest? Quite simply the **Computer Shopper Show** formula.

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"People who came were definitely interested in buying and a lot of money changed hands. We will definitely be there this year."
Leslie Cupitt
Computer Express

CONTACT

Lynda Williams or Gail Blincow
The 1990 Computer Shopper Show
Blenheim Database Exhibition Ltd, Europa House,
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